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GARDENS ILLUSTRATED

NEW SERIES

Insights into Arne Maynard's MAGICAL GARDEN

Leading designers reveal their favourite SPRING BULBS

Our guide to the best

Crab apples

Learn the traditional art of

Hedge laying

Babylonstoren Garden

Gardens and Wildflowers of South Africa's Western Cape

South Africa is world renowned for its stunning scenery, cultural diversity, rich variety of wildlife and in particular its indigenous flora. Our tour is at a time when the wildflowers should be putting on a dazzling spring display and we will also enjoy a mixture of famous and private gardens, estates and vineyards.

Fly from London to Cape Town where we will be based for the first three nights. Here we will enjoy a cable car to the top of Table Mountain, whose flora encompasses some 1470 species including South Africa's national flower, the Protea. We will have a full day at Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, truly one of the world's top gardens, where we will have an exclusive guided tour. We continue with a visit to the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve where we should see an array of wild flowers.

We then begin our tour around the Western Cape by travelling north to the small town of Clanwilliam in time to visit the annual Flower Show. (The later departure date will coincide with the Darling Flower Show). We will also be guided through the wildflower lands of Cederberg, Niewoudtville and the Biedouw Valley.

Our journey continues through the lesser known West Coast National Park and the small town of Darling. Wildflowers, wild birds, stunning scenery and wine tastings – all that is good about the Western Cape is there to be enjoyed.

At Karoo National Botanical Gardens we will enjoy its wide variety of desert and semi desert plants along with its large succulent collection. We will then wind our way at a relaxing pace via a most interesting charitable project at Flower Valley and thence to Hermanus and the coast once more. Here we should be in perfect time to see the spectacle of the Southern Right Whale migration.

Our tour finishes on a high with a string of wonderful gardens around the Stellenbosch area including the Harold Porter Botanical Garden, Vergelegen, Helderberg, Arderne and the stunning Babylonstoren.

Departures

Aug 25, Sep 11, 2016

15 nights from **£4,295pp**

Single room supplement **£520**

What's included

- 13 nights' accommodation on a bed and breakfast basis: three nights at the Cape Town Hollow Hotel; two nights at the Piekenierskloof Resort; one night at the Buffelsfontein Game Reserve; two nights at the Cumberland Hotel, Worcester; two nights at the Windsor Hotel, Hermanus; three nights at the Stellenbosch Hotel (or similar)
- Dinner and welcome drink on the first evening plus three additional dinners
- Scheduled return flights from London Heathrow to Cape Town (regional flight connections and flight upgrades available at a supplement)
- Exclusive guided tour of Kirstenbosch
- Visits to Table Mountain, the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve, Clanwilliam Flower Show/Darling Flower Show, wine tastings and wildflower botanising, private garden visits of Klein Openhorst, Karoo Botanic Gardens, Harold Porter, Vergelegen, Babylonstoren and Arderne Gardens; whale watching boat trip
- Services of a professional tour manager

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editor's letter

Not long after the magazine relocated to Bristol, I visited designer Arne Maynard at Allt-y-bela, his new home in Monmouthshire. I remember us walking around the garden, Arne buzzing with excitement over his plans. Today, almost a decade later, the garden has evolved greatly, sitting even more happily in its pastoral setting, and the atmosphere is utterly magical. I'm delighted that this month sees the start of our four-part series, looking at Allt-y-bela's seasonal highlights, beginning with structure in the garden. I particularly love the pleached crab apples that enclose the front garden, providing beautiful blossom and fruit and fortuitously, on page 56, plant expert Graham Rice recommends a selection of the best. We also visit Hortus Bulborum in the Netherlands, a living museum for a unique collection of historic bulbs, including tulips, daffodils and hyacinths. Being somewhat fixated on providing seasonal interest, I always find it a bit odd putting pictures of spring flowers in October; however, it's a good time to plan next year's displays and alongside our feature on Hortus Bulborum, we've asked five highly regarded designers to share some of their favourite spring-flowering bulbs. On page 104, inspired by the designers' choices, we have a special offer from Avon Bulbs. After months of work from behind the scenes, I'm delighted to announce that the *Gardens Illustrated* Shop website is now up and running. Please visit shop.gardensillustrated.com to find out about our new range of beautiful and useful products for gardeners, and a an introductory offer. I hope you enjoy the issue.

Juliet

Gardens Illustrated is available as a digital edition – search 'Gardens Illustrated' on the App Store, Google Play or Zinio.com

Find the perfect crab apple for your garden, page 56.

Discover which of the featured designers loves *Tulipa sprengeri*, page 42.

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DIANNA JAZWINSKI, GAP PHOTOS / HOWARD RICE

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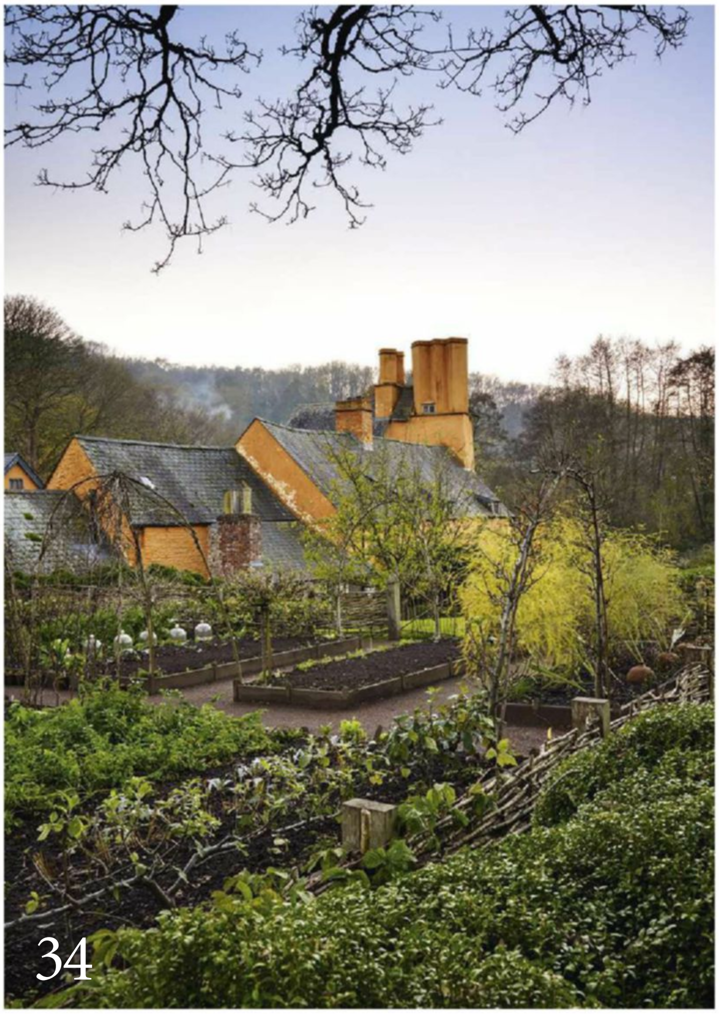

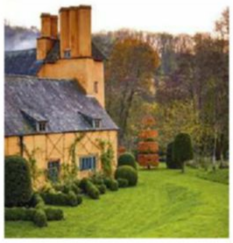

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Allt-y-bela
Photography by
Jason Ingram

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DIANNA JAZWINSKI, JASON INGRAM

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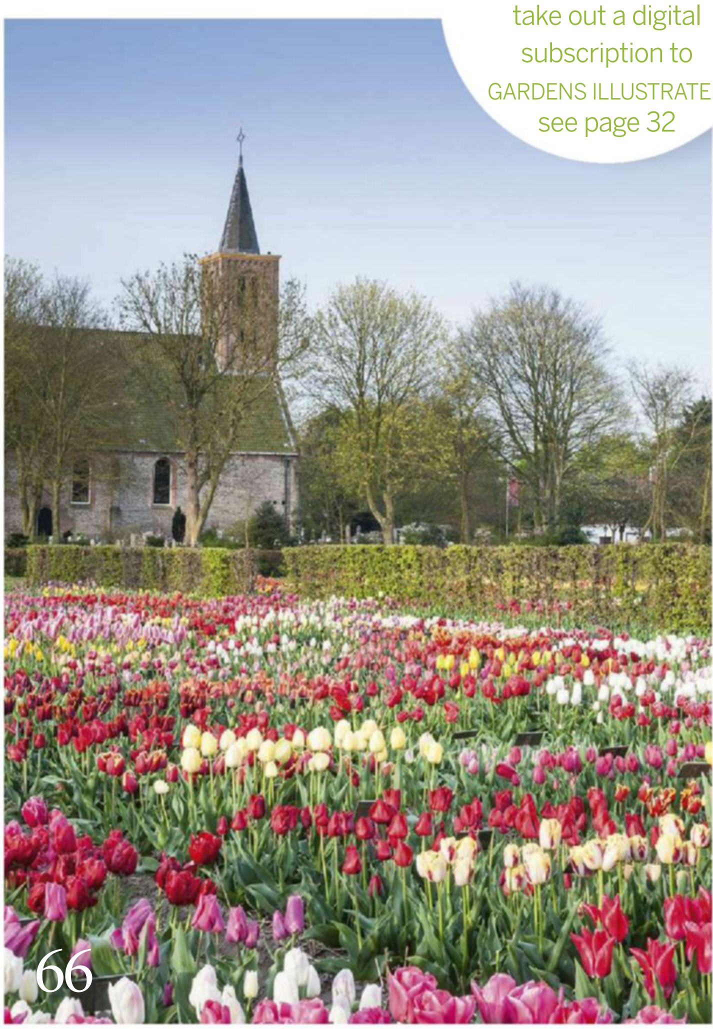

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ANDREW MONTGOMERY; JASON INGRAM

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- See the latest line-up for the ***Gardens Illustrated* Festival 2016** – page 9 – this year held in the Cotswold town of Tetbury; plus book tickets for our exclusive reader holiday to **Alsace and Rhineland** – page 10 – led by writer and plantsman Noël Kingsbury
- Save money when you **subscribe to the digital edition** – see page 32

Save 20% on spring-flowering bulbs from Avon Bulbs – page 104

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contributors

SIETSKE DE VRIES

Turning her passion into a full-time job makes it possible for photographer Sietske to visit interesting places that make for beautiful photographs. She found the garden at de Jorissenhoeve impressive and a joy to shoot. You can see her photos of the garden on page 50.

"I doubt the owner and designer Ineke knows herself how beautiful her garden work is – it is like paradise."

WILLIAM COLLINSON

ARNE MAYNARD

Central to Arne's work as a garden designer is his ability to identify and draw out the essence of a place, something that gives his gardens a particular harmony. On page 34 he reveals how he set out to achieve this sense of belonging in his own garden.

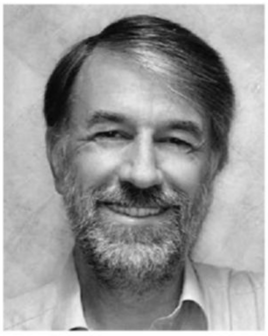
"In October I love the way the garden melts into the landscape, settling down into the valley after the exuberance of summer."

ANDREW MONTGOMERY

NATASHA GOODFELLOW

Writer Natasha's passion for gardens has lead to some interesting roles of late. She's currently working with award-winning garden designer Luciano Giubbilei on his new book. She visits a beautiful garden in the Netherlands on page 50.

"Ineke's garden is a true labour of love and her knowledge of – and care for – each individual plant is astounding."



GRAHAM RICE

Graham is a Kew-trained plantsman and author. He gardens in Northamptonshire and Pennsylvania and has won writing awards on both sides of the Atlantic, most recently for his blog TranatlanticGardener.com. See page 56 for his advice on crab apples trees.

"With their buds, blossom, fruits and foliage, crab apples bring us colour in two or three seasons every year – and there's the jelly."

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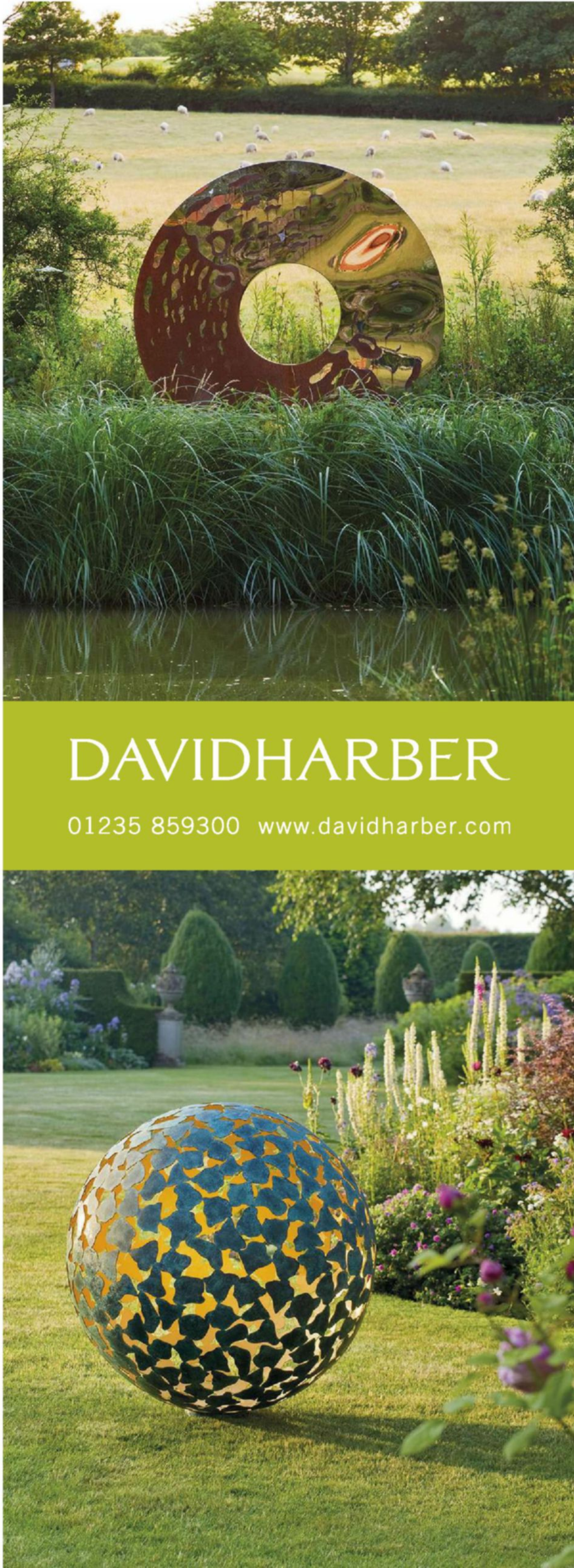

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A NEW GREEN SCENARIO

17 OCTOBER 2015

Re-thinking tourism and business through innovative garden design. A showcase of Mediterranean horticulture and landscape

The Mediterranean is a rich territory including old traditions and new innovation. It's the epitome of an attractive environment for its concentration of biodiversity and its particular physical and climatic features. The goal of **A new green scenario** is to define new concepts of tourism and business as development agents through a creative garden design that combines classical and contemporary elements. During the conference the **Radicepura Garden Festival** is to be introduced as an international event for garden design, running from April to October 2017.

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18 OCTOBER 2015
Sarah Eberle Masterclass

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Exclusive Reader Events 2016

***Gardens Illustrated* Festival**
22-23 April 2016 – page 9

Reader Holiday to Alsace and Rhineland
11-15 June 2016 – page 10

GARDENS ILLUSTRATED Festival

22-23 April 2016, Tetbury, Gloucestershire

Make a date to join us at our Festival to celebrate gardens, gardening, plants and design

GARDENS
Festival
All
welcome

We are delighted to announce the dates for our second *Gardens Illustrated* Festival. Taking place over the weekend of 22-23 April 2016, we will once again be gathering together an exciting programme of speakers who will talk on a range of fascinating horticultural topics.

Importantly, we have moved location this year. We're still in the Cotswolds but in the charming town of Tetbury, where all our festival activities can be grouped in one location. Alongside the talks there will be a marquee selling a fine selection of gardening goods and plants from some of our favourite companies and artisan makers. You'll also find our garden plant and design clients offering individual advice, a series of workshops open to all and plenty of freshly made teas, coffees and lunches.

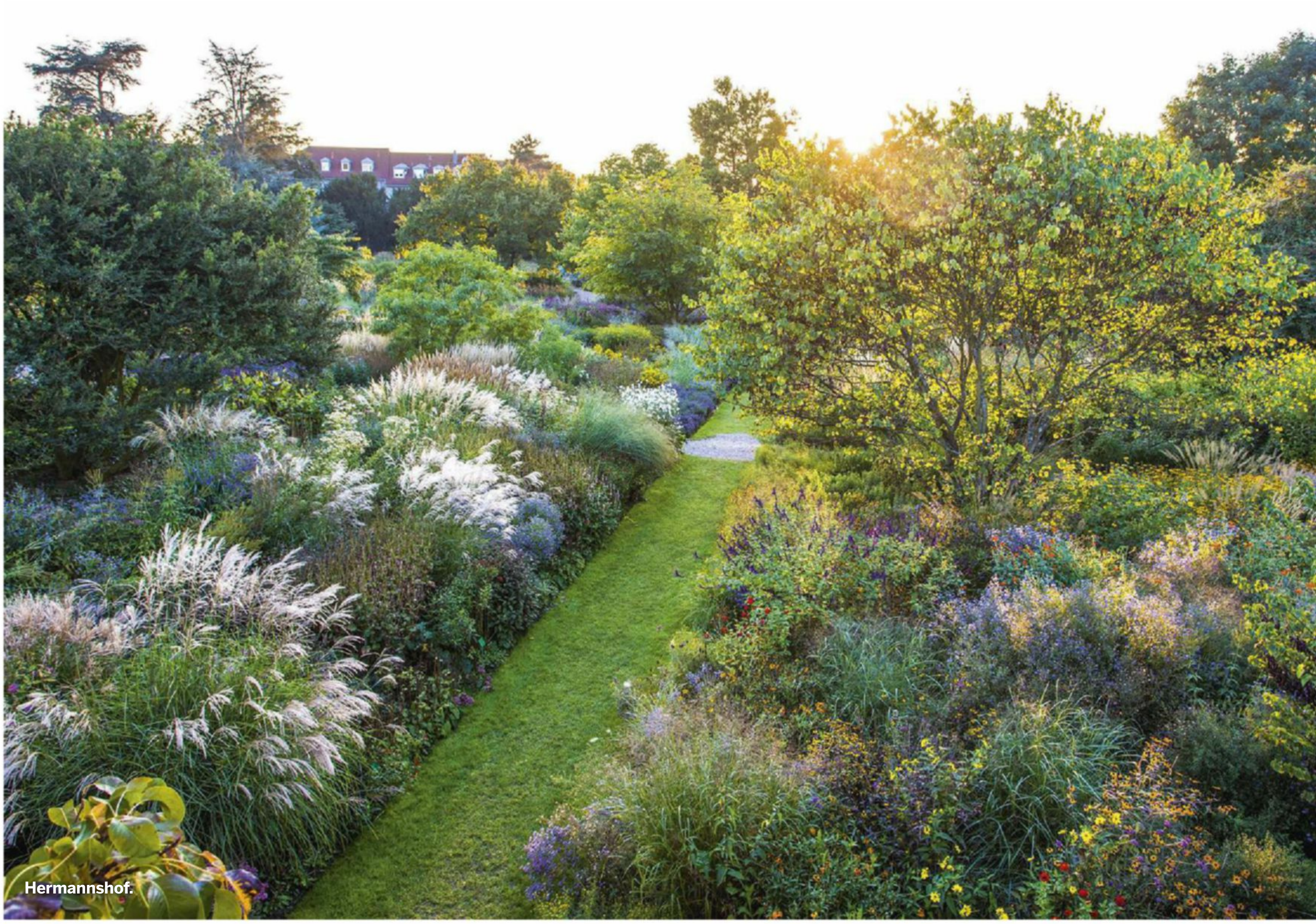
And we'll be organising garden tours too, including to nearby Rodmarton Manor, a magnificent Arts and Crafts house and garden with generous borders, topiary and superb vistas.

Confirmed speakers for 2016 include: Arne Maynard, Cleve West, Roy Lancaster, Tim Richardson, Mark Diacono, James Alexander-Sinclair, Fergus Garrett, Jinny Blom, Carol Klein, Helen Dillon, Troy Scott Smith, Val Bourne, Matthew Wilson, Marina Christopher and Chris Beardshaw.

Full details of all events and how to book can be found at

gardensfestival.com

2015 FESTIVAL IMAGES BY JASON INGRAM. PORTRAIT OF HELEN DILLON BY JANE SEBIRE



11-15 June 2016

Gardens of Alsace and Rhineland

Join writer and plantsman Noël Kingsbury and like-minded *Gardens Illustrated* readers to discover the richly planted gardens that span the borderland areas of Alsace and Rhineland, sharing a unique French and German heritage and character

Tour leader
Dr Noël Kingsbury, garden writer, lecturer and planting designer, is an expert in perennials and planting schemes with a particular interest in continental planting design.

The fertile Rhine river valley cuts between the Vosges Mountains and the Black Forest and forms a natural border between France, Switzerland and the southwesterly corner of Germany, sometimes referred to as the 'Tuscany of Germany'. On this trip we travel northwards, weaving between France and Germany, over an area that's home to a surprisingly rich selection of gardens.

Your five-day tour includes a visit to **Landhaus Ettenbühl**, renowned for its roses, where you will be joined at lunch by the owner and head gardener. You'll also travel into the Vosges Mountains to visit **Jardin d'altitude du Haut Chitelet**, which features lovely alpine planting. At this time of year the wild flowers of the region should also be at their peak, making a visit to the mountains particularly memorable. Nearby is the renowned and atmospheric **Le Jardin de Berchigranges**, set amid mountain forests, it's a garden with a strongly naturalistic feel and huge personality, and was recently featured in *Gardens Illustrated*

Landhaus Ettenbühl.

Schloßgarten Schwetzingen.

Le Jardin de Berchigranges.

Château d'Isenbourg.

[issue 219]. Also featured recently in *Gardens Illustrated* [issue 225], is **Hermannshof** in Weinheim – a real highlight of the tour. It is one of Germany's most exciting public gardens and very much at the forefront of experimental planting design. **Les Jardins de la Ferme Bleue**, designated one of France's *jardin remarquable*, is a wonderful example of the region's typical, historic, cobalt-blue-painted architecture, with the farm set in a series of refined and intimate garden rooms. We also visit **Schloßgarten Schwetzingen**, one of the most imposing and complex historical gardens in Germany, now lavishly restored, and offering visitors a fascinating view into the 18th century's intellectual and gardening passions.

During your visit you will stay at **Château d'Isenbourg**, in the vine-clad foothills of the Vosges, and at **Hotel Europäischer Hof**, Heidelberg, where generous hospitality and culinary specialities will contribute to your enjoyment of the region. ◻

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DUTCH CHOCOLATE

Two new shades, 'taupe' and 'cream', were the inspiration for the Schellevis 'Dutch Chocolate' garden at RHS Chelsea Flower Show back in May. Award-winning garden and landscape designer Carien van Boxtel took the opportunity to reference the work of Dutch landscape architect Louis le Roy (1924-2012) in her design. Le Roy stacked used pavers without cement in his masterpiece De Ecokathedraal, allowing plants to grow freely, and creating a perfect marriage between natural and man-made material.

Exquisite planting at Chelsea in caramel, cream and brown shades with accents in bright orange – the Dutch national colour – matched the warm chocolate colours of the paving perfectly and some of the flowers even smelt of cocoa, giving the garden a truly mouth-watering look and feel. It proved a hit, catching the eye of garden writer Sarah Raven and described as 'my find of the show' by Dan Martyr of Node Urban Design.

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What's happening, where to go, what's in flower and what to buy this month

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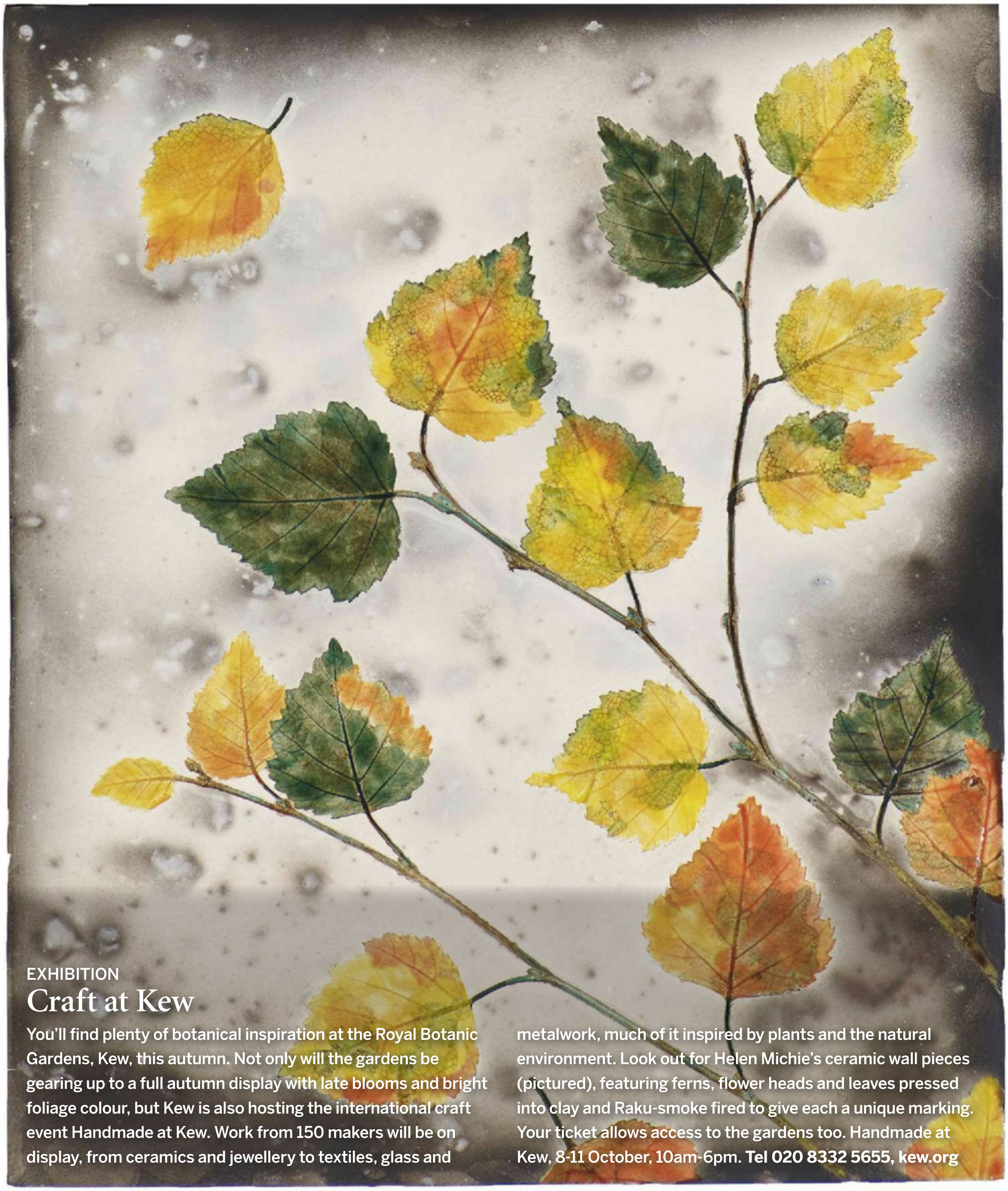

HELEN MICHIE

EXHIBITION

Craft at Kew

You'll find plenty of botanical inspiration at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, this autumn. Not only will the gardens be gearing up to a full autumn display with late blooms and bright foliage colour, but Kew is also hosting the international craft event Handmade at Kew. Work from 150 makers will be on display, from ceramics and jewellery to textiles, glass and metalwork, much of it inspired by plants and the natural environment. Look out for Helen Michie's ceramic wall pieces (pictured), featuring ferns, flower heads and leaves pressed into clay and Raku-smoke fired to give each a unique marking. Your ticket allows access to the gardens too. Handmade at Kew, 8-11 October, 10am-6pm. **Tel 020 8332 5655, kew.org**

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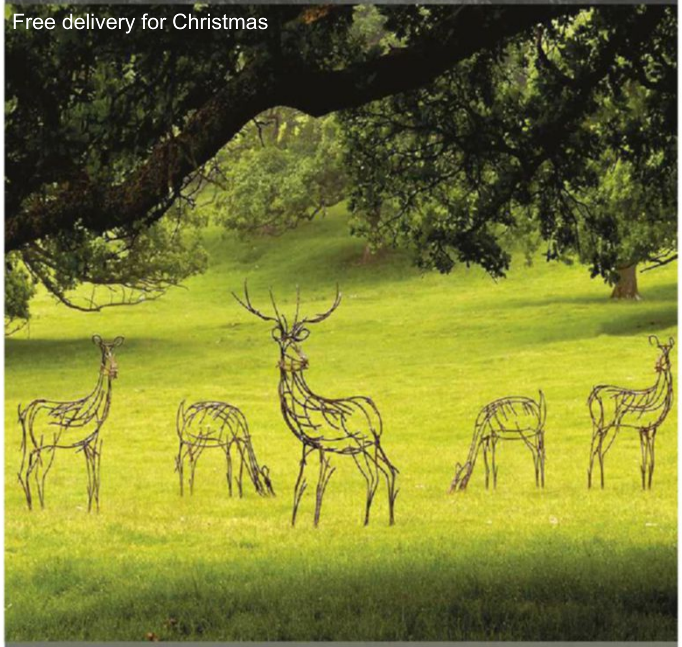
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ALERT

Agapanthus pest

The Royal Horticultural Society is asking gardeners who grow agapanthus to be on the look out for a new pest. The newly named 'agapanthus gall midge' lays its eggs inside developing buds. The hatched larvae then cause buds to fail to flower, or open deformed and discoloured. First noted in Surrey in 2014, very little is known about the pest's life cycle, the full damage caused or the extent of its spread. If you've noticed problems, please send details or affected samples (in sealed containers) to the RHS so that studies can be furthered. **rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?PID=901**

PLANT HEALTH

Top notch box

Gardeners now have to accept that box hedging and topiary can be susceptible to devastating fungal diseases that cause box blight. To help prevent blight taking hold, Dutch box grower Topbuxus has developed Health Mix – a natural leaf fertiliser containing trace elements. The aim is that a regular application sprayed on to foliage three to five times a year makes plants healthier and stronger and therefore less susceptible to fungal disease. It can also help stop symptoms spreading if spotted early. **topbuxus.com**

TOPBUXUS
HEALTH-MIX

VINCENZO PINTO/GETTY; SEAN MALYON

DIVINE INSPIRATION

The villa at Castel Gandolfo, 15 miles southeast of Rome, has served as a papal summer retreat since 1626, although it wasn't until 1929 that this was formalised and its gardens were transformed to incorporate terracing with panoramic views alongside archaeological remains. Last year Pope Francis granted public access for the first time and as of September this year it is possible to take a round trip by train from Rome's San Pietro station out to Castle Gandolfo to tour the gardens. To book go to **bigliettteriamusei.vatican.va**. You can find more details about this garden and other Italian gardens of note via Grandi Giardini Italiani network (**grandigiardini.it**).

GARDEN GOODS

Gardens Illustrated online shop open

We are delighted to announce that our online *Gardens Illustrated* Shop is now up and running offering a selection of carefully chosen garden products. And to celebrate its arrival we're offering a 10 per cent discount on all online orders until 16 October. We've three fabulous gardening hand tools, made for us by the excellent Dutch toolmaker Sneeboer, and a selection of stylish leather goods designed in conjunction with Bradleys, a small, independent English tannery. There's also baker's twine in a range of colourways, our large-canopied umbrella and a cotton tea towel designed exclusively for us by illustrator Hannah McVicar. Browse the shop at **shop.gardensillustrated.com**

LEARNING

Beth Chatto plantsmanship course

If you want to learn more about plants and plant history there's still time to sign up for the Certificate in Plantsmanship run by the Beth Chatto Gardens, which starts on 6 October. There are no exams; the weekly classes are simply about getting more enjoyment from your garden by understanding the plants in it – plus you'll get to observe at first hand the expert plantsmanship at the gardens. The cost of the 30-week course is £695. **Tel 01206 822007, bethchatto.co.uk**

Griffin Glasshouses, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, has launched a new range of made-to-measure, glasshouse workbenches to complement its range of bespoke glasshouses. For more information call 01962 772512 or visit griffinglasshouses.com

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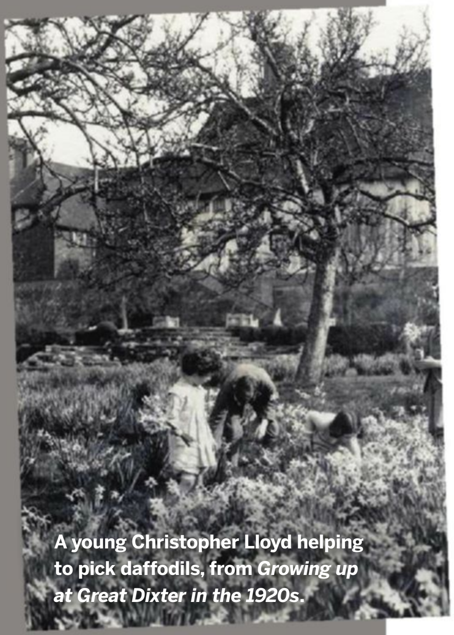
TRUE BRITISH BLUE

If you are thinking of adding bluebells to your spring display next year, aim to source native bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) rather than the thuggish Spanish *Hyacinthoides hispanica* now encroaching into UK displays. Bulb company Gee Tee offers packs of cultivated *H. non-scripta* in large quantities to establish that hazy drift of blue. It also offers true wild native bluebells dug, under government licence, from a sustainably managed wild population. It's illegal to collect wild bluebell bulbs yourself, but Gee Tee is working with Dr Vera Thoss of Vera Bluebell Farm to help increase displays of these precious blooms. Tel 01205 260412, gee-tee.co.uk

Diary

Enjoy autumn colours and perfect planting days



A young Christopher Lloyd helping to pick daffodils, from *Growing up at Great Dixter in the 1920s*.

- **Planting with Perennials**

Plantsman and designer Noël Kingsbury looks at how to maximise interest and minimise maintenance – plus Macplants Berrybank Nursery tour. 2-3 October, 10am-4pm, £60. Macplants, Berrybank Nursery, Pencaitland, East Lothian EH34 5BA. Tel 07939 528444, semplebegg.com

- **Great Dixter Plant Fair**

Specialist nurseries from across Europe selling unusual and desirable plants. 3-4 October, 11am-4pm. £8. While there, pop in to see the *Growing up at Great Dixter in the 1920s* exhibition of photographs on display in the house. Great Dixter, Northiam, Rye, East Sussex TN31 6PH. Tel 01797 252878, greatdixter.co.uk

- **Out of Nature exhibition**

Over 200 pieces of sculpture, from over 40 artists, that celebrate our link with nature. 3-25 October, 10.30am-5.30pm, £5. Newport House, Almeley, Herefordshire HR3 6LL. Tel 07917 740200, outofnature.org.uk

- **Kelmarsh: Norah Lindsay and Nancy Lancaster**

Fundraising talk that looks at the women who shaped the gardens at Kelmarsh – their inspirations and influences. 4 October, 11.30am, £45. Tickets must be booked in advance. Includes lunch and garden visit. Kelmarsh Hall & Gardens, Northamptonshire NN6 9LY. Tel 01604 686543, kelmarsh.com

- **Photography Day at Larch Cottage Nursery**

Photographer Val Corbett at Larch Cottage Nursery gives advice on how to capture autumn colour. 7 October, 10am-1pm, £30. Larch Cottage Nurseries, Melkinthorpe, Penrith, Cumbria CA10 2DR. Tel 01931 712404, larchcottage.co.uk

- **Botanical Illustration Course**

Learn how to observe and record nature in illustration, and take inspiration from autumnal hips, haws and berries. Very Berry, 9 October, 10am-4.30pm, £75. Ardington School of Crafts, Ardington, Oxfordshire OX12 8PN. Tel 01235 833433, ardingtonschoolofcrafts.com

- **Putting Down Roots**

Tree Council campaign to encourage planting fruit and nut trees for the future. Foraging, seed gathering and planting events at various locations through country. 23 September – 23 October. treecouncil.org.uk

GAP PHOTOS/JACQUI HURST; CARPE DIEM – FLORA / ALAMY

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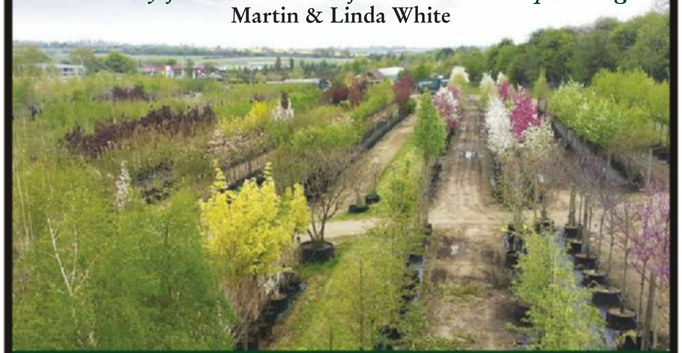
Absolutely fantastic service from selection to planting. Martin & Linda White



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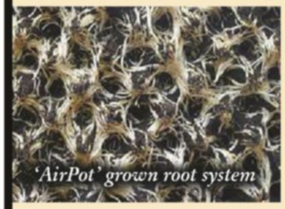

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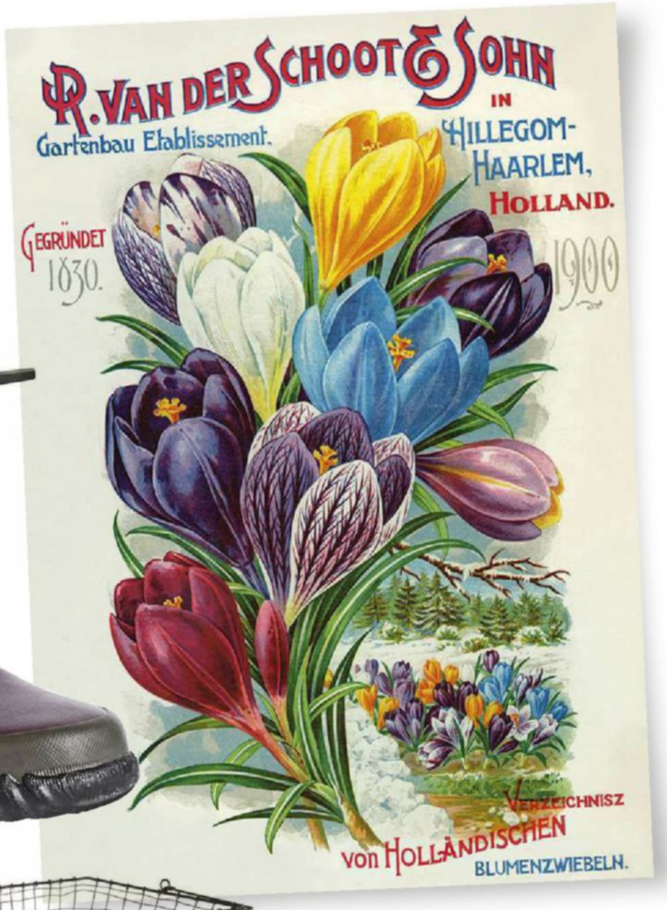
Fallen Fruits set of 6 zinc plant labels with waterproof marker, £6.49, amazon.co.uk



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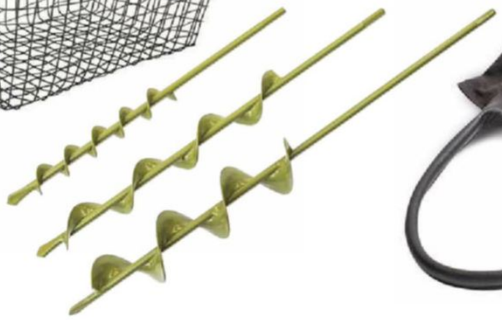

Bulb planting augers, in three sizes, for use with a cordless drill, £7.99-£16.99, 01344 578111, crocus.co.uk

***Gardens Illustrated* waxed cotton and suede garden kneeler,** £40, 0344 245 8098, shop.gardensillustrated.com (see page 106 for more details)

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Get kitted out

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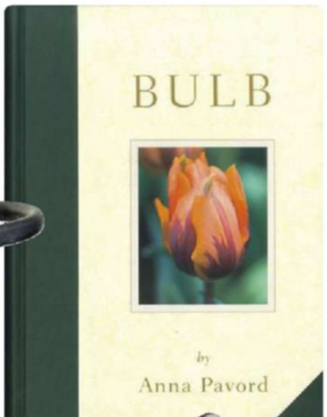
***Bulb* by Anna Pavord,** £30, octopusbooks.co.uk



Sophie Conran dibber, perfect for planting small bulbs, £14.95, 0114 233 8262, burgonandball.com

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3

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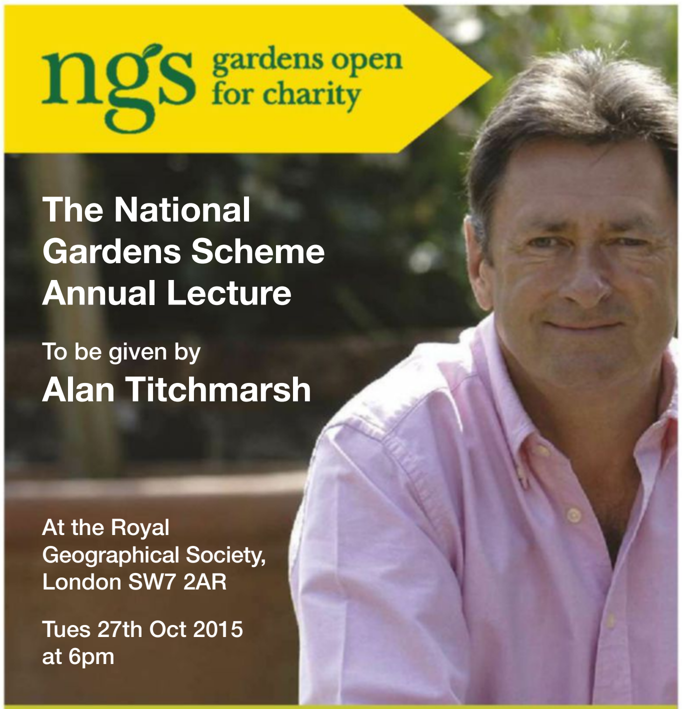
Wagner Multi Roller Creo grey plant trolley, 38cm diameter, RRP £28.99, available from longacres.co.uk and most garden centres nationwide

DUNGAREES PHOTO BY SEAN MALYON



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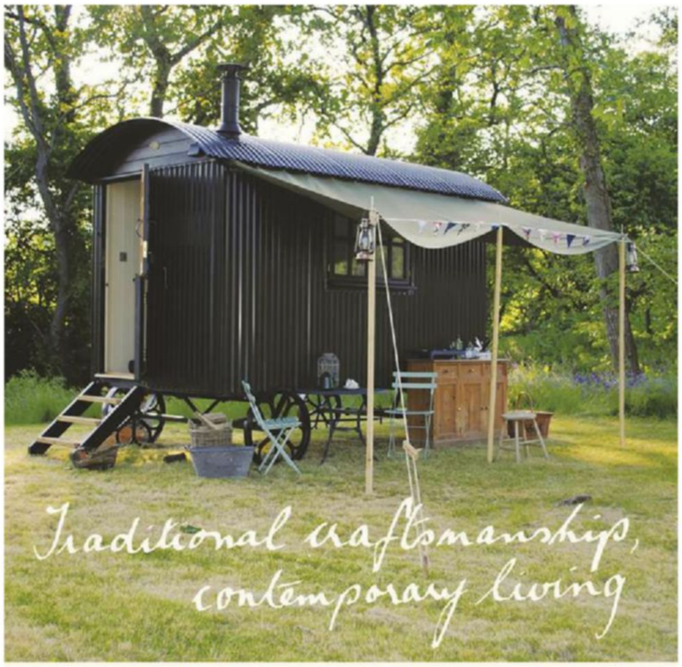

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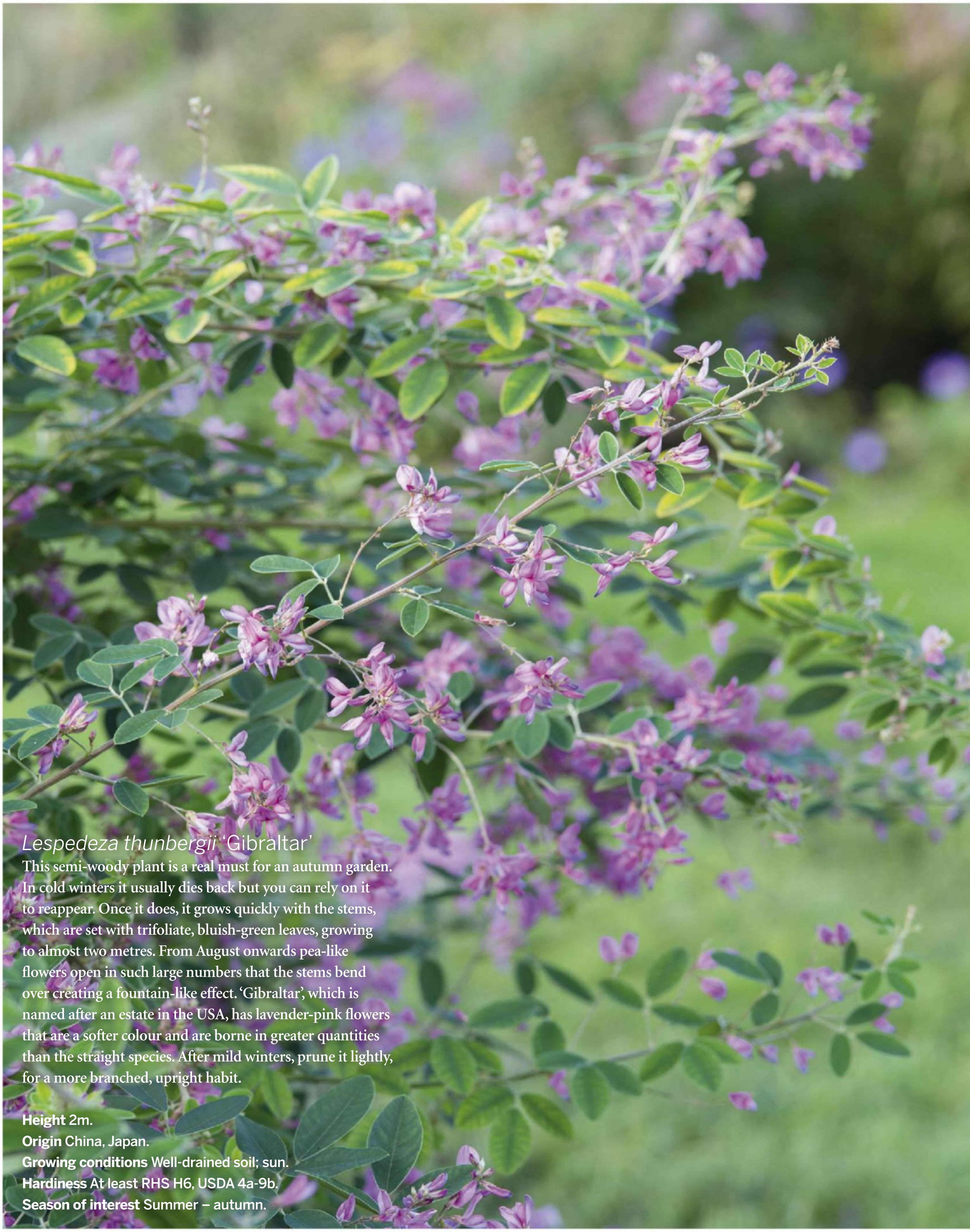


Lespedeza thunbergii 'Gibraltar'

This semi-woody plant is a real must for an autumn garden. In cold winters it usually dies back but you can rely on it to reappear. Once it does, it grows quickly with the stems, which are set with trifoliate, bluish-green leaves, growing to almost two metres. From August onwards pea-like flowers open in such large numbers that the stems bend over creating a fountain-like effect. 'Gibraltar', which is named after an estate in the USA, has lavender-pink flowers that are a softer colour and are borne in greater quantities than the straight species. After mild winters, prune it lightly, for a more branched, upright habit.

Height 2m.
Origin China, Japan.
Growing conditions Well-drained soil; sun.
Hardiness At least RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.
Season of interest Summer – autumn.

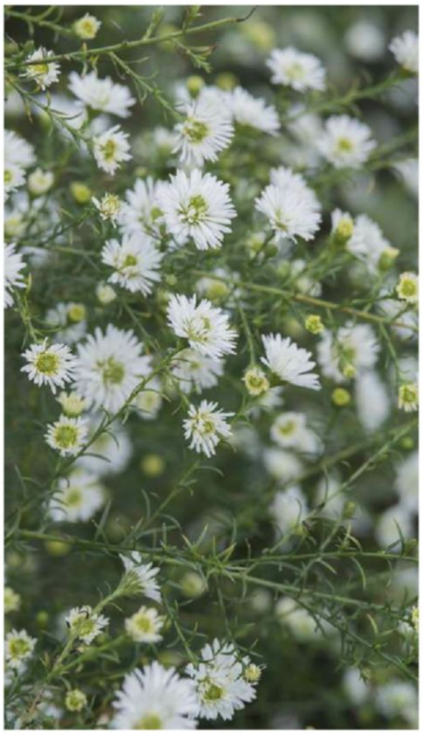
CHARLIE HOPKINSON

Hans Kramer co-owns Kwekerij De Hessenhof in the Netherlands. hessenhof.nl

October plants

Even in October there is still plenty of colour to be found in the garden. Hans chooses his favourites to brighten your autumn borders

WORDS HANS KRAMER PHOTOGRAPHS MAAYKE DE RIDDER



Symphyotrichum pilosum var. *pringlei* 'Monte Cassino Double'

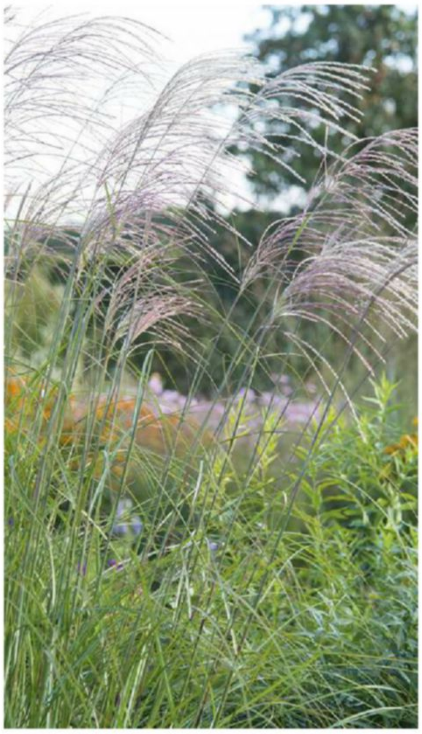
Aster specialist Matthieu Vermes from Le Domaine de la Source recommended this plant to me. The single 'Monte Cassino' is a popular cut flower, but you don't tend to see this double form as often. A shame, because it is the perfect garden plant. The dark-green, linear foliage on twiggy stems is never affected by wilt and, from September onwards, hundreds of small, fully double, pure-white pompons open with pale-green centres. A very clean, fresh plant that lasts until late autumn.

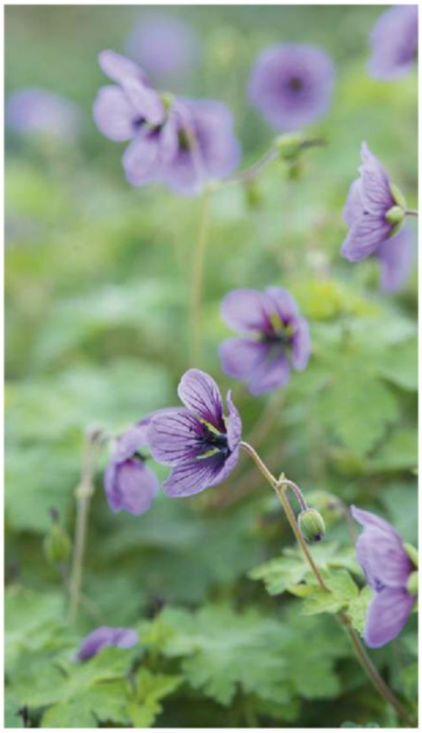
Height 1m.
Origin North America.
Growing conditions Normal soil; sun.
Hardiness RHS H7.
Season of interest Summer – autumn.

Miscanthus sinensis 'Beth Chatto'

In the early 1990s I paid a visit to Ernst Pagels' nursery in northern Germany along with Beth Chatto, Piet Oudolf and Rob Leopold. I remember Ernst was very impressed by Beth, and some years later named one of his most beautiful *Miscanthus* seedlings after her – in fact, it was the last *Miscanthus* selection he named before his death in 2007. The whole plant has an elegant, filigree look. Its narrow leaves are relatively low to the ground, providing extra space for the dark stems that carry silvery, slightly bent, brown plumes.

Height 1.8m.
Origin China.
Growing conditions Normal soil; sun.
Hardiness RHS H7.
Season of interest Summer – autumn.

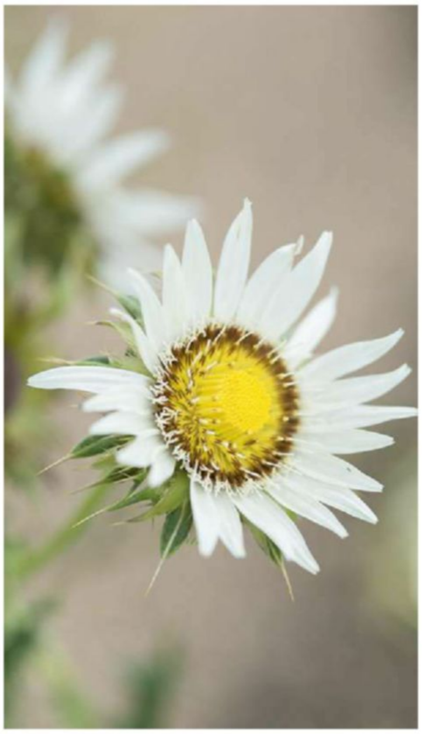




Geranium 'Salome'

This very good plant arose on the nursery of my good friend Elizabeth Strangman in about 1981. Elizabeth and Ernst Pagels were my propogation role models and Elizabeth's Washfield Nursery was one of the finest I've ever seen. Elizabeth only propagated the very best – I'm always tempted to propagate too much. Among the mass of new patented geraniums, 'Salome' shines like a fiery candle with big, light-violet petals that have darker veins running to a very dark centre. If you place it in part shade it will flower until the first frosts.

Height 60cm.
Origin Himalayas.
Growing conditions Humus-rich soil; dappled shade.
Hardiness RHS H5.
Season of interest Summer – autumn.



Berkheya cirsiifolia

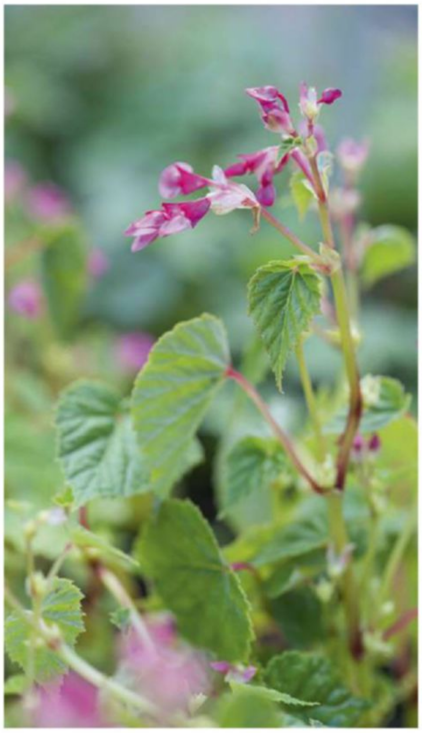
Year after year I am astonished by the performance of my purple-flowered *B. purpurea* – a long-lived perennial that appears to be fully hardy. Its hardiness tempted me to try other species and I found this white-flowering one behaves much the same. Its leaves are prickly, like a creeping thistle, but it's more handsome than its purple counterpart. Each stem, which branches at the top, can produce up to six large, white flower heads. These are very attractive with soft-yellow disk florets. Bees love it. Here on our sandy, well-drained soil it is fully hardy to -18°C.

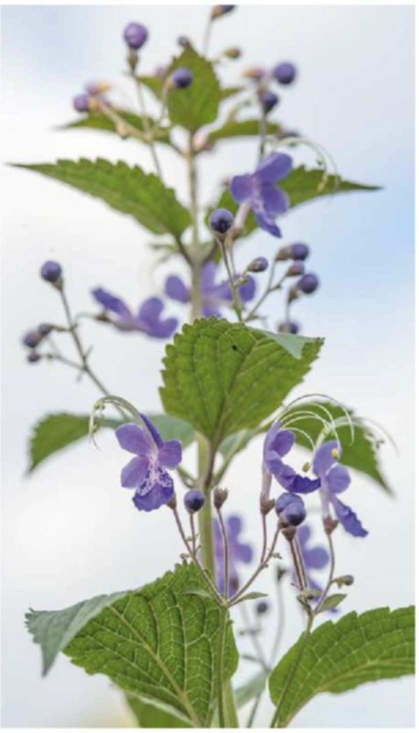
Height 80cm.
Origin South Africa.
Growing conditions Well-drained soil; sun.
Hardiness RHS H5, USDA 8a-10b.
Season of interest Summer – autumn.

Begonia grandis 'Modest Miniature'

Ton Hannink, a well-known clematis collector, gave me this unassuming plant, which he found in China. It's a form of *B. grandis*, but with smaller flowers that are more congested and sit upright, making them more visible above the leaves. In addition the leaves are smaller and a darker green, with an almost deltoid shape. Bulbils are freely formed and in one season you can grow hundreds of plants. Better still, it is even hardier then *B. grandis*, providing a nice hardy begonia for the garden.

Height 35cm.
Origin China.
Growing conditions Humus-rich soil; sheltered position; part shade.
Hardiness RHS H5.
Season of interest Summer – autumn.





Trichostema 'Blue Bonnets'

A French nurseryman gave me this great autumn plant, which I planted next to my *Caryopteris divaricata*. They look almost the same, although this is much nicer because of its bigger, deeper-coloured flowers, darker leaves and the neater upright habit. It also flowers two weeks later and continues until the first frosts. The flowers are intriguing, and look as though they are turned upside down with a finely marked underlip and prominent stamens that bend downwards from the upper part of the flower.

Height 1.6m.
Origin China, Japan.
Growing conditions Well-drained soil; sun, part shade.
Hardiness RHS H6.
Season of interest Summer – autumn.

Places to visit

Recommended places to see seasonal plants at their best, both here in the UK and in mainland Europe.

The Japanese Garden in Clingendael Park, The Hague, opens only twice a year – for little more than a month in spring and again, even more briefly, in the autumn. It was created in 1910 by Marguérite, Baroness van Brienen (1871-1939), better known as Lady Daisy, who owned the Clingendael estate in the early 20th century. From her numerous trips to Japan, she brought back many beautiful, and rare, plants and trees – not to mention a number of stone lanterns, sculptures, a little bridge and even possibly a pavilion. In October the autumn foliage of the acers is especially beautiful. Open 10-25 October. denhaag.nl/japansetuin

The Japanese Garden in Clingendael Park.

Cally Gardens, Scotland

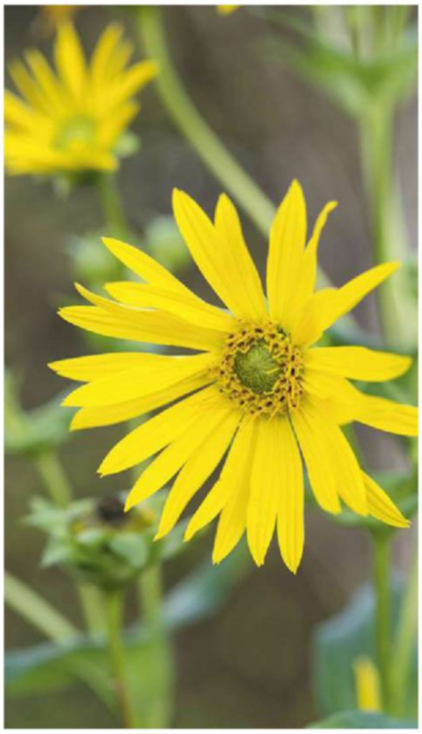
ANASTASY YARMOLOVICH / ALAMY

Belsay Hall, Castle and Gardens in Northumberland is best known for its romantic Quarry Garden.

Silphium perfoliatum

I acquired this rather lovely plant, grown at Great Dixter, from head gardener Fergus Garrett. I believe it is an old garden clone, if so it's a good one. Unlike many others, it does not self seed and is very impressive, with thick, square stems carrying big, rugged leaves that clasp around the stem. The leaf bases can still contain water long after it has rained. From August onwards, large, yellow, daisy-like flowers appear here and there, replaced in autumn by attractive seedheads, which, when still green, look a little like small double roses.

Height 2m.
Origin North America.
Growing conditions All soils; sun.
Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.
Season of interest Summer – autumn.



Cobaea pringlei

In full flower this climber is breathtaking, and, provided you mulch the roots in winter, is hardy. We've had ours for more than 12 years and it has survived several hard winters. Every May when it reappears, I'm always a little relieved – although some years it hasn't come back until June. Normally, you can expect white flowers by the end of August. These are smaller and more modest than the more familiar *C. scandens*, but its vigorous growth makes up for that. I once had it popping out of a tall conifer – a spectacular sight.

Height 5m.
Origin Mexico.
Growing conditions Fertile soil that's not too dry; sun or part shade.
Hardiness RHS H5.
Season of interest Summer – autumn.

Chrysanthemum 'Mélanie'

It is good to see that these old-fashioned plants are having something of a revival and it is worth searching in the mass of cultivars for the toughest ones. 'Mélanie', which I found at a French plant fair, is a very basic and modest chrysanthemum. What I like about it is its reliable growth, forming large bushes that have almost ground-covering capacities. The single, sweet-tempered flowers start off mid-pink and fade to a nice pale shade – a process that goes on until November. The flowers are very tough and not easily damaged by first frosts.

Height 70cm.
Origin China, Korea.
Growing conditions Any soil with good drainage; sun.
Hardiness RHS H7.
Season of interest Summer – autumn.

Created in the 18th century by Sir Charles Monck, its ravines and pinnacles form a microclimate that allowed Sir Charles's plantsman grandson, Sir Arthur Middleton, to intoduce many rare and exotic plants. In October though it's also a lovely garden for enjoying autumn foliage and the scent of burnt sugar from numerous copper-coloured *Cercidiphyllum japonicum*, as well as the colour of autumn-fowering crocuses and rhododendrons. Belsay Hall, Castle and Gardens, Belsay, Nr Morpeth, Northumberland NE20 0DX. Tel 0370 333 1181, english-heritage.org.uk

Picton Gardens
The University of Oxford Botanic Garden

There's more autumnal foliage to enjoy at **Sheffield Park** in East Sussex with spectacular views across 'Capability' Brown's parkland and four lakes to reflect the colours of the trees. Sheffield Park, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 3QX. Tel 01825 790231, nationaltrust.org.uk

Plus there is still time to visit **Picton Gardens**, home to one of best collections of autumn-flowering asters. But be quick, it closes for the season on 18 October. Old Court Nurseries, Colwall, Malvern, Worcestershire WR13 6QE. Tel 01684 540416, autumnasters.co.uk

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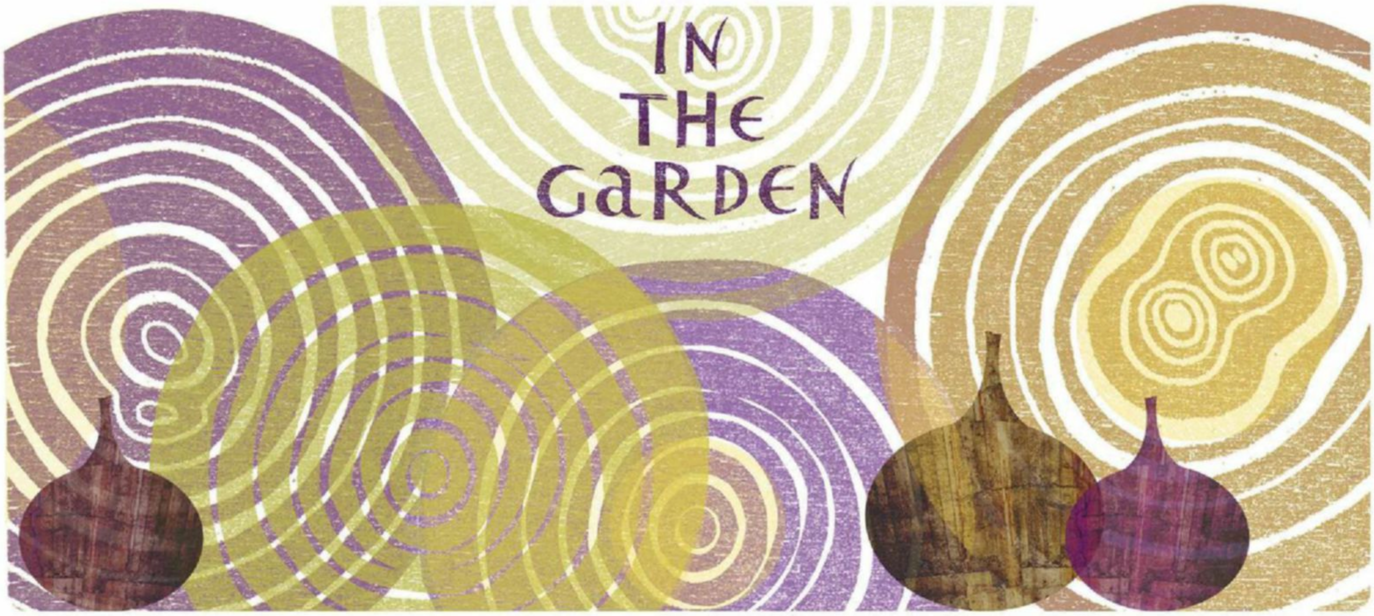


IN THE GARDEN

There's a lot to be said for knowing your onions, says Jojo, especially as the choice of those you can grow are infinitely tastier than any from a shop

WORDS JOJO TULLOH ILLUSTRATIONS SARAH YOUNG

The standard onion available is a harsh, rank-tasting object when compared to the subtly flavoured kinds we can grow for ourselves. Just like that other staple, the potato, the choice of onions available in seed catalogues makes what's on offer in shops look rather pathetic. Coloured golden, red, purple, white or green there are onions to store, onions to eat fresh, salad onions, pickling onions and that oddity the Egyptian or tree onion (*Allium cepa* var. *viviparum*) with its long, wand-like stem topped with bulbils.

Onions can be grown from seed or sets (immature bulbs about the size of a cherry tomato). For a year-round supply of onions from seed, sow twice, once at the end of the summer and again in the spring. It is cheaper to sow seed, there's more choice and you will grow higher quality bulbs, but it's a more involved process. I find sowing into compost in a small pot then transplanting the seedlings gets good results. It's even easier to plant sets and you can do this right now. There's something very satisfying about popping the bulbs into the earth and I like the pocket of order a square bed of onions grown in diagonal lines gives to my winter garden. As you will be hoeing off weeds as they appear, the onion acts as a cleaning crop.

Onions like an open site and fertile soil but should not be planted in freshly manured ground, so dig over and manure your ground a few weeks in advance. Space the sets 10cm apart with 30cm between rows, pushing them into the ground gently with only the papery tip showing. If bulbs are disrupted by worms or pulled out by birds, replant gently and try not to damage the roots. I cover mine with a square of netting held up by vine twigs. Planting them in soil that previously held brassicas helps with the problem of white rot, a fungal disease that attacks alliums, garlic and leeks.

WHAT TO DO NOW

- For autumn planting, try 'Radar', a white bulb streaked with green, with thick green stems that can be chopped and eaten too. The Organic Gardening Catalogue (organiccatalogue.com) offers this fast-maturing, very hardy cultivar at £5.24 for 500g. It also has the non-organic 'Comred' with glossy, dark red spheres (£3.95 for 50 onions). Another favourite autumn planting set is 'Senshyu Yellow', a hardy Japanese onion that produces squat, slightly flattened bulbs of a pale-gold colour. Thompson & Morgan (thompson-morgan.com), 75 sets for £3.99.
- Shallots have a sweeter flavour than regular onions – the torpedo-shaped shallot often referred to as a 'banana' shallot is my default cooking allium. I always plant out a net full of 'Echalote Grise', available from Tuckers Seeds (edwintucker.co.uk), £3.25 for 250g.
- Last year corn salad self-seeded among the onions. It may not have aided their bulbing (they hate to be shaded), but the round, buttery leaves of the corn salad against the green spears of the alliums were too pretty to pull up, especially when they flowered.
- Order seed now for a spring sowing of hardy 'Early Paris White', from the Real Seed Catalogue (realseeds.co.uk), £1.64 for 300 seeds, which produces round, strikingly bright-white onions with long, green stems very early in the year. If you were organised and planted onion seeds in the last week of August, they should need transplanting out in early October about 15cm apart.
- For those who want to grow storing onions, to plait into fat ropes to decorate the kitchen, then the 'Yellow Rynsburger' is a traditional long-storing variety with skin that ages to a deep, russet brown from The Real Seed Catalogue, £1.80 for 350 seeds, which also has the attractively named 'Liria', a sweet and spicy storing onion named after the town near Valencia, Spain, where it has been grown for centuries. Red onions can be less consistent croppers but try 'Amposta' (for storing) and the purple 'Red Brunswick' (to eat fresh), as well as the flavourful 'Long Red Florence' and versatile 'Purplette'.
- It's tempting to put it off, but make the most of sunny autumn days to get your plot cleaned up for winter. Consider inviting a few friends to help you – tell them a little digging on a crisp day can be very therapeutic. Remove withered plants and dig over the soil, either planting a green manure, such as mustard or field beans, or covering with weed-suppressant fabric if you are battling with perennial thugs, such as couch grass and bindweed. Save up the raked leaves for leaf mould.

IN THE KITCHEN
KILNER
EST 1942

The past can be a rich source of culinary inspiration. In an early treatise on vegetable cookery I came across this proverb: *L'autunno per la bocca et la primavera per l'occhio*, which loosely translates as autumn is for tasting, spring is for looking. The writer acknowledging this season's bounty was Giacomo Castelvetro (1546-1616), a sophisticated literary refugee who fled the clutches of the Roman Inquisition and came to England where, used to an Italian diet of carefully cooked vegetables, he found the meat- and sugar-heavy diet appalling. His book *The Fruit, Herbs and Vegetables of Italy* (1614) describes his idea of luxurious cooking – the very freshest of vegetables cooked without fuss. A linguist and translator, Castelvetro left behind a short but very elegant book of great clarity. The book, split up into seasons, is a good read for the kitchen gardener and has many excellent ideas, such as steeping elderflower blossoms in vinegar or adding chopped onion to a purslane salad. Autumn contains some tasty sounding suggestions for pumpkins – the flesh cut into fingers, floured and fried and served with bitter orange juice (Sevilles) or smaller gourds boiled whole and braised in butter. I find it useful to freeze Seville oranges in January and use them as needed. Another interesting recipe uses the tips of pumpkin vines, cut off to palm-length pieces, tied in bundles and boiled, then dressed with melted butter, salt, pepper and bitter orange juice. *Agliata* also sounds tempting, a mixture of pounded walnuts, garlic and breadcrumbs thinned with stock that can be eaten with pork or used to dress pasta.

Adding vinegar to water is a practice that dates back to the Romans, but fruit shrubs were a popular drink in colonial America

Lately there's been a revival of drinking vinegars – called shrubs – as a fashionable base for cocktails and tonics. Adding vinegar to water is a practice that dates back to the Romans, but these kinds of fruit shrub were a popular drink in colonial America. Made from fruit steeped in sugar and vinegar, the name comes from the Arabic for drink – *sharab*. They are tart and sour and much more appetising than they sound.

This recipe is for elderberry shrub but you could also use other fruits, such as damsons, crab apples, quince, redcurrants or blackberries. Take a large, clip-top glass jar and fill with 250g elderberries. Pour over 500ml red wine vinegar. Keep the jar somewhere cool and dark and shake from time to time. After a couple of weeks, strain the liquid into a pan and heat gently, stirring in as much or as little sugar as suits your palate. When the sugar has dissolved bring the liquid up to the boil and boil for two or three minutes. Skim off any scum. Strain the shrub into a bottle and seal with a cork. Use the tart syrup mixed with water, tonic or soda to make a refreshing soft drink or try mixing with white wine, sherry or bitters for a cocktail. □

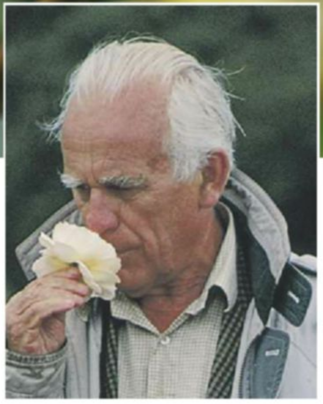
RECIPES

With so much produce at this time of year, preserving some is a good idea. Fermentation, the ancient art of turning raw ingredients into something new by harnessing beneficial bacteria, is one of the kitchen's oldest magic tricks, and is ideal for preserving excess. I like to ferment baby root vegetables whole in a light bath of vinegar and salt, or grate vegetables as in sauerkraut.

Sauerruben

This is the turnip version of sauerkraut (ruben means turnip). It has a mild, horseradish flavour and is much less tough than the cabbage version. I have a large, glazed crock with stoneware weights for making large quantities of sauerkraut and kimchi but for everyday purposes I use a 1.5 litre clip-top jar. Take **1kg turnips** (not too big and bitter) and grate into a bowl. Squeeze the grated turnips to release juice. Pack the turnips down into the jar, sprinkling **½tbsp sea salt** over as you go. Push the matter down with your hand so there's 1cm or so of briny juice on top. Take a jam jar that will fit inside the clip-top jar, fill with water, put the lid on and use it as a weight to keep the turnip below the level of the brine. Cover with a piece of kitchen towel tied on with string to keep off insects and dust. Leave for a few days, then taste every now and then. In colder weather the flavour will develop over months (or weeks if it's warmer), but you can put it in the fridge to halt the fermentation process when you like the taste. You can use this recipe with carrots, cabbage, beetroot and radishes too.

Golden Celebration *(Ausgold)*



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Steve Edney

A former tree surgeon, Steve is now a head gardener and cherishes the ten years he has spent helping to restore the gardens at The Salutation in Kent

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Early garden memory Going out of my way to pass by the local allotments on my walk to junior school. I remember being in awe of the pristine rows of vegetables and flowers and wondering how they did it.
First plant love I've always had an affinity with trees and woodlands, which is the reason I trained as a tree surgeon at Merrist Wood. My favourite trees are beech and almost all *Sorbus*.
Career inspiration There are several people who have inspired me to be a gardener – none of whom are famous – including my grandparents. They taught me (without my realising I was being taught) not just how to grow food but what to do with your gluts: together we cooked stored, pickled, jammed and chutney'd our way through the summer holidays.
Three most worthwhile tips for every gardener Attention to detail makes you a professional; learn the natural rhythm of your garden, you cannot fight nature just bend it; garden to the season not to a book – consider a book as a guideline more than a set of rules.
Favourite planting style I love a formally designed garden with asymmetrical cottage-garden style planting that feels like nature has lent a hand in its creation. I also love exotic planting with lots of tender and hardy, tender-looking plants. It is such an exciting way to garden.
Least favourite plant group Life is too short for heathers but to be honest I dislike rhododendrons, camellias and Japanese acers almost as much. That said, any of those plants in the right place can work. I try not to think of plants in isolation.
Unsung hero of the plant world *Plectranthus*. We have more than 60 species, cultivars, varieties and forms at the garden and many make fantastic garden plants or pot specimens. Closely allied to salvias, they require shade or part shade, are drought tolerant and very easy to grow, mostly flowering in late summer to autumn.
What heartens you about our attitude to horticulture today? We are in a golden age of gardening, where we are creating spaces for pleasure not just for practicality or survival. Importantly, we are beginning to realise we can't keep pouring chemicals on the earth to fix everything and that voice is getting louder. ☐
Contact steven.edney@live.com
- For details on visiting The Salutation go to the-secretgardens.co.uk

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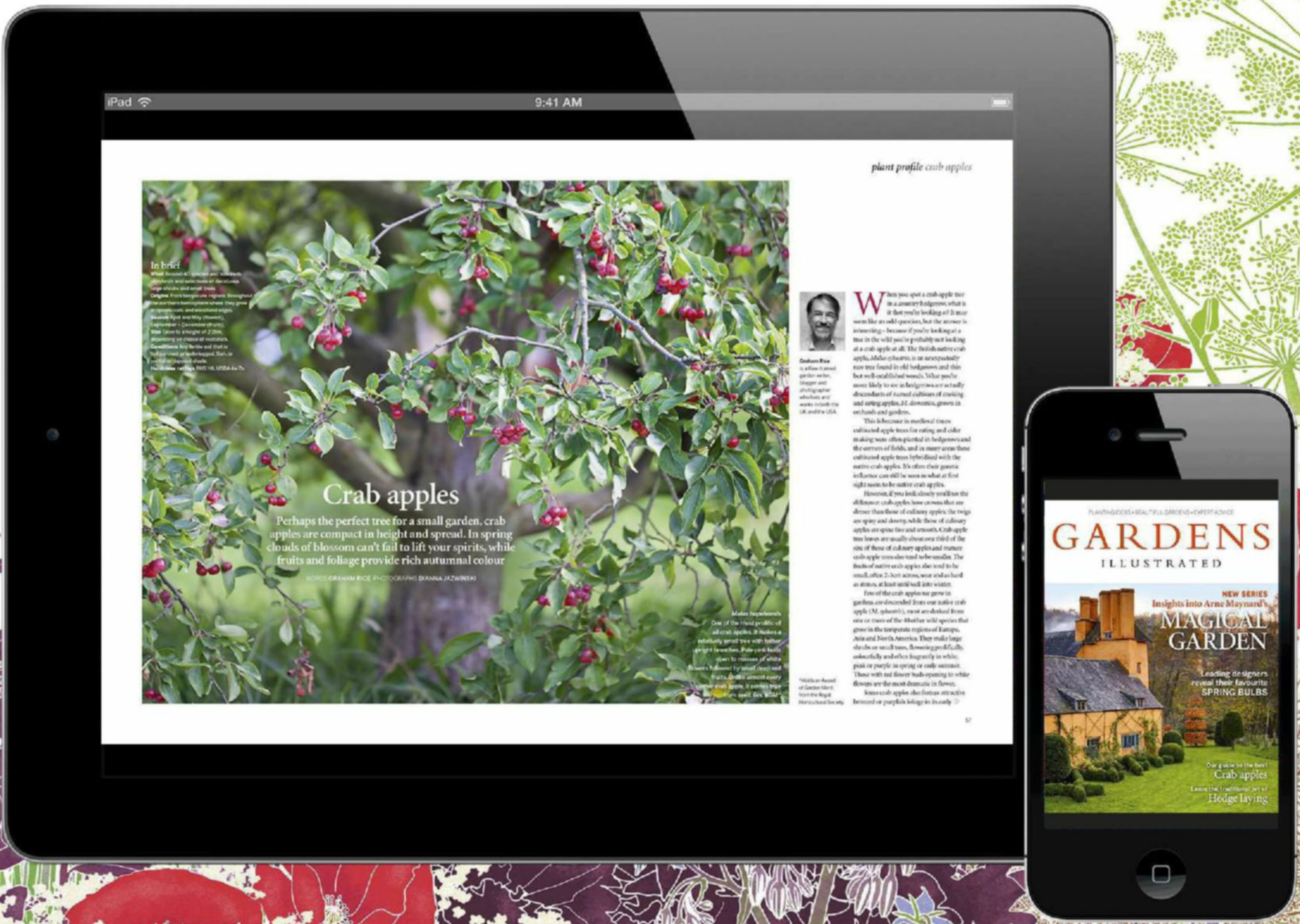
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GARDENS
ILLUSTRATED

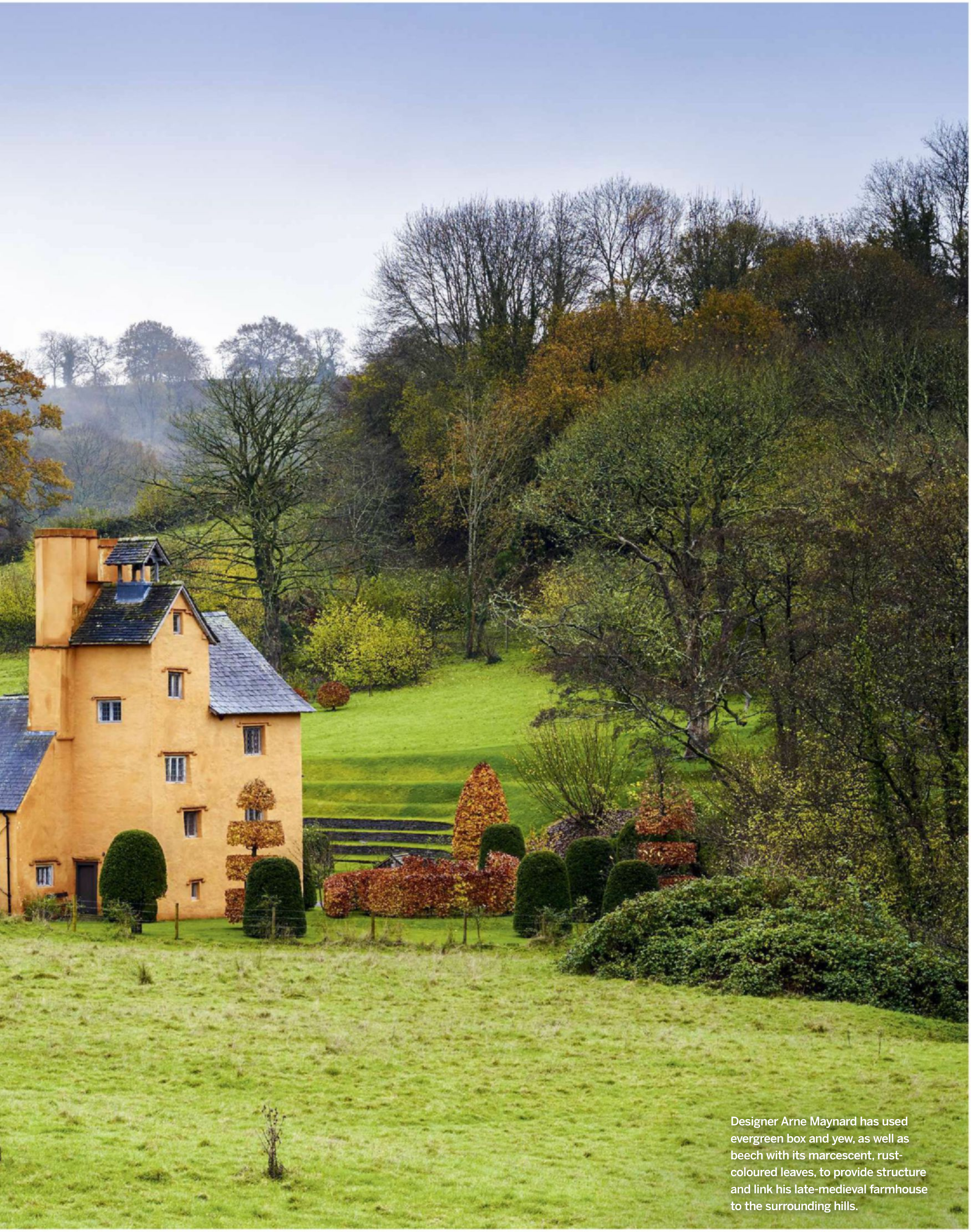
In brief

Name Allt-y-bela.
What Designer Arne Maynard's own garden with strong structure and colourful planting.
Where Monmouthshire.
Size Five acres.
Soil Loam and clay mix on top of clay.
Climate Sheltered, sun trap with heavy rain fall.
Hardiness rating USDA 8.

A designer's year

In the first of a four-part series, designer Arne Maynard shares insights into his own garden in Monmouthshire, explaining how the changing seasons shape his gardening year, beginning, as winter approaches, with the importance of structure

WORDS **ARNE MAYNARD** PHOTOGRAPHY **JASON INGRAM**



Designer Arne Maynard has used evergreen box and yew, as well as beech with its marcescent, rust-coloured leaves, to provide structure and link his late-medieval farmhouse to the surrounding hills.

Allt-y-bela translates from the Welsh as 'the high wooded hillside of the wolf'. In autumn, that wooded hillside in tawny colours makes its presence intensely felt. In the golden light of October, frequently diffused by mists that rise from the stream, everything appears to be softened. Even the leaves are antique, mottled and gentle. The garden here must connect with that, nothing should jar. The 'wolf' waits for winter, not literally of course, but the greys and silvers, the dark growl and frosted light comes later, when the branches on the hillside are bare, and what is now soft, later becomes sharp and graphic.

When I moved to Wales from Lincolnshire, I had to completely re-think my approach to garden design. My previous garden, at Guanock House, was an enclosed formal garden in the flat fields of the Lincolnshire fens. It was an oasis, which stood apart from its surroundings. There I was able to indulge my love for the late 17th-century style of gardens you see in engravings by Leonard Knyff and Johannes Kip, built on symmetrical hedged enclosures and straight axes. At Allt-y-bela there are no straight lines, no room for formal herbaceous borders, and there is no symmetry to be found in the house or the surrounding hills. Here, the garden cleaves to the landscape and I had to find a way for it to belong. I still needed to create structure, to define the garden, give it a framework, strength and flow, so I used clipped topiary instead of hedges to indicate arrival points and form divisions within the garden. These clipped forms filter rather than tunnel your ▷

Elements of structure at the front of the house

1 The layered topiary beech, with its bright-golden leaves is most striking at this time of year. It holds the eye within the garden, when the trees behind are losing their leaves. In the summer the copper beech spiral behind it performs a similar role, its deep-plum colour is a striking contrast, against the backdrop of green.

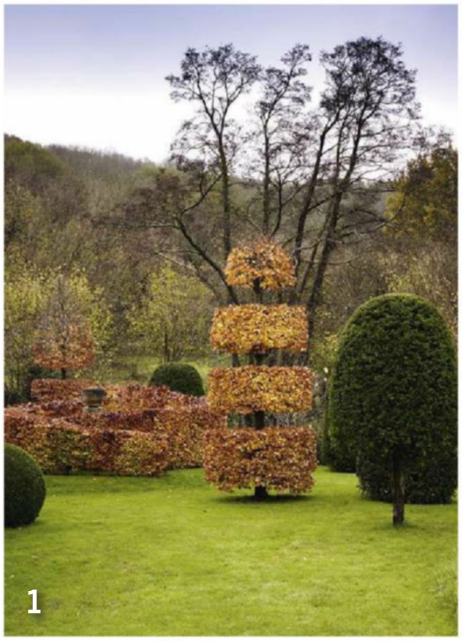
2 I call the walled courtyard garden next to the front door my 'Cabinet of Curiosities'. In it the evergreen structure of the box balls on stems and the yew topiary create a framework through which I can grow rare bulbs and precious flowers. In the summer, this is where I grow one of my favourite roses. This *Rosa* 'Cardinal de Richelieu' flowers in a rich, deep-magenta and even in autumn and winter when there are no flowers, its stems, trained around hazel domes, add to the architecture of the space.

3 A double spiral of clipped copper beech hedging is raised up on a low mound sited below the tower. I had originally planned a square knot garden for this space, but the angles of my boundaries didn't allow for it. I'm glad I was thwarted, because the simple strength of the spiral is in the end a better companion to the square tower and it also acts as an unexpected gateway into the garden at the back. Entering it at an angle, you are turned, and therefore view the garden, through a full 360 degrees, pausing at the centre to take in a simple urn sitting on a stone column, before continuing out to the garden at the back.

4 Pleached *Malus* 'Evereste' crab apple trees follow the curve of the wall and enclose the little garden at the front of the house. These are another key part of the structure; the tracery of their branches forming a transparent screen in front of the lower part of the building that both lessens the imposing scale of the tower and forms a textured reprieve to the long stretch of limewashed wall behind.

5 Pots of *Salvia* 'Amistad', *S. leucantha*, *Cosmos atrosanguineus* and African blue basil (*Ocimum kilimandscharicum*) provide a magnificent show late into autumn. They are not hardy, so we take cuttings to ensure we have new plants for next year. Soon the planting in the pots will be changed, for the spring-flowering bulbs.

• Turn over for more structure ideas ▷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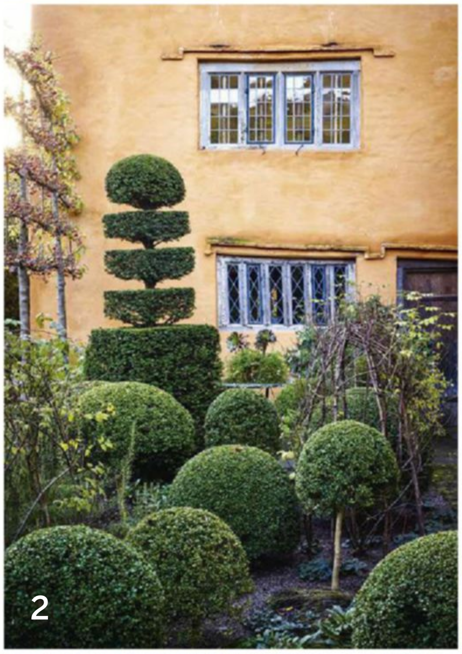
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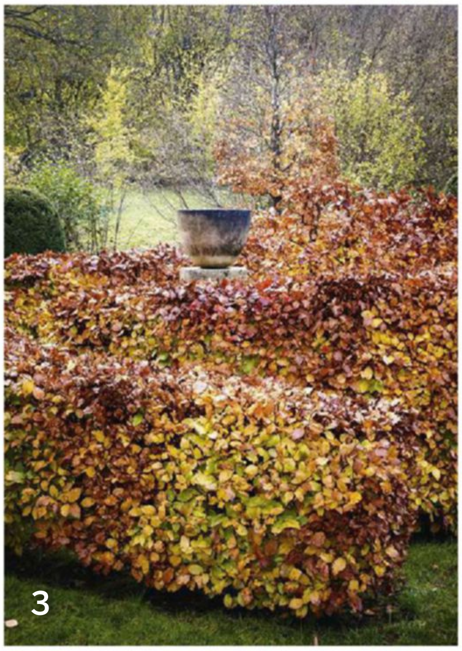
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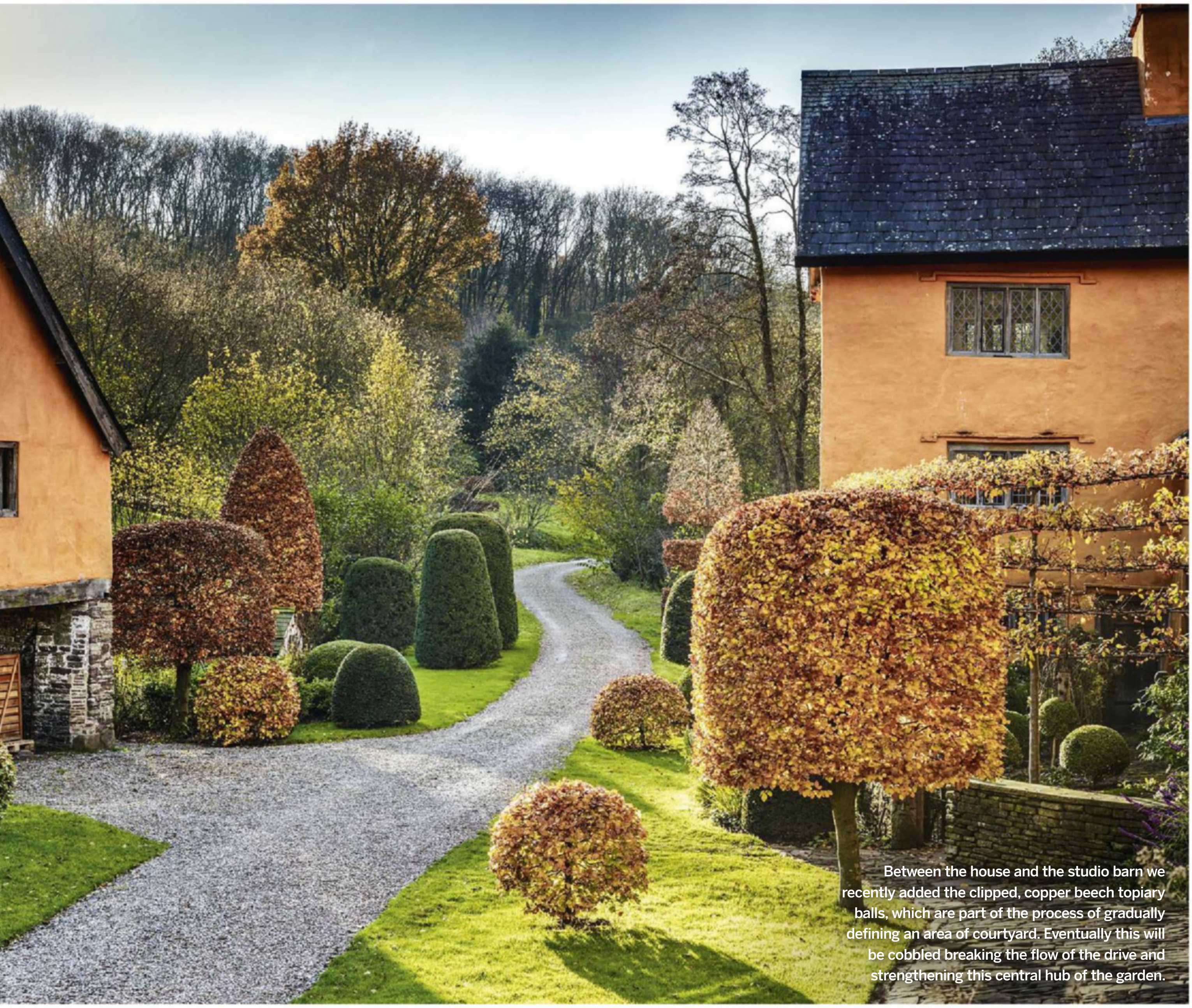


Between the house and the studio barn we recently added the clipped, copper beech topiary balls, which are part of the process of gradually defining an area of courtyard. Eventually this will be cobbled breaking the flow of the drive and strengthening this central hub of the garden.

4

5

▷ vision, and draw you around the garden. They punctuate the spaces with their strong verticality, hiding and revealing views just as hedges would but in a more subtle way.

To keep them informal, the topiary are clipped, in differing forms, from a mixture of plant material: yew (*Taxus baccata*), box (*Buxus sempervirens* and *B. sempervirens* 'Myrtifolia'), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), copper beech (*Fagus sylvatica* Atropurpurea Group) and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*). The beech leaves are marcescent – especially when clipped – they cling on until the fresh, spring growth pushes them off. The cinnamon colour and crisp texture of these leaves have a strong impact especially where the contrast is clearest, either side of the snaking drive, where the mixed topiary jostle for space on the clipped grass cushion close to the house. In summer, when this scene is mostly green, it is the flowers and glossy copper beech topiary that grab the attention.

Last year we added further structure to the garden, with tiered stone and clipped grass banks that form a garden theatre. The banks rise up from a stream, which we also walled, strengthening its prominence as the central spine of the garden. Up above the clipped banks, is the meadow, cut back, raked and mown for autumn. I'm excited by the space that cutting back creates, not only in the meadow, but also elsewhere in the garden; in beds and borders. It feels luxurious and restful to the eye after the crowded abundance of summer. It's time to plan new flower combinations, plant bulbs and new perennials, packing away treats that will relinquish their rewards next spring. ◻

Behind the house

1 *Rosa* 'Astra Desmond' is trained on the northeast-facing back wall, supported by a criss-cross of hazel rods that are renewed every year. The uprights are pushed into the ground at the base and tied on to the gutter supports at the top of the wall. This way there is no need to add any structural fastening points, which would puncture the limewash. This lattice pattern is repeated throughout the garden: in paths in the cottage garden and as a low, cloud-clipped box hedge below the roses on the back wall. This hedge gives structure, but with a lighter touch than a framed, formal border.

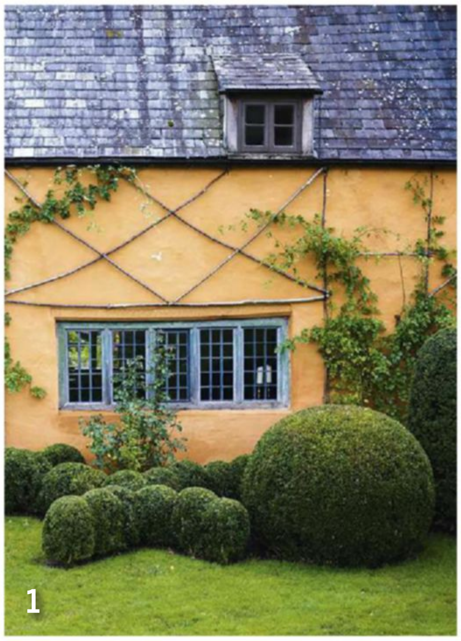
2 Trained fruit trees are a very flexible way to form permanent structure, particularly in the vegetable garden. You can use them to create entrances, divisions or allées, or to punctuate spaces, and they take up very little ground space. Training and pruning them requires a degree of dedication and horticultural skill, but it is work that is very quickly rewarded.

3 Vegetables are grown in raised, oak-edged beds, which are laid out in a simple, rectilinear pattern. I find this really helps with organisation and crop rotation. The arrangement of the beds was inspired by garden plans in an early gardening book, *The Gardener's Labyrinth* by Thomas Hill (1577), which contains many illustrations that have sparked ideas for my own garden and others I have designed.

4 The hill at the back used to sweep down to the building, finishing well above floor level and carrying channels of water straight into the house whenever it rained. We had to remove soil to create drainage and a 'breathing space' level with the ground floor. This pragmatic action gave me the chance to form a contemporary sweeping sculptural earthwork. A crisp, flat path takes you up to the kitchen garden, through a steep grass bank, and forms a visual link to an ancient droveway, which cuts across the hill above the house.

5 Pear cordons are trained on arched hazel rods over the main paths of the kitchen garden. After five years the pears have joined at the top and developed a pleasingly knarled maturity. They barely need supporting any more. Below the arch the hazel gate between oak posts was made by Steve Lannin, my gardener, to keep the chickens out. A beech topiary dome breaks the undulating line of the boundary hedge, catching the eye, before it wanders out of the garden, to the horizon of the hills beyond.

• Turn over for more structure ideas ▷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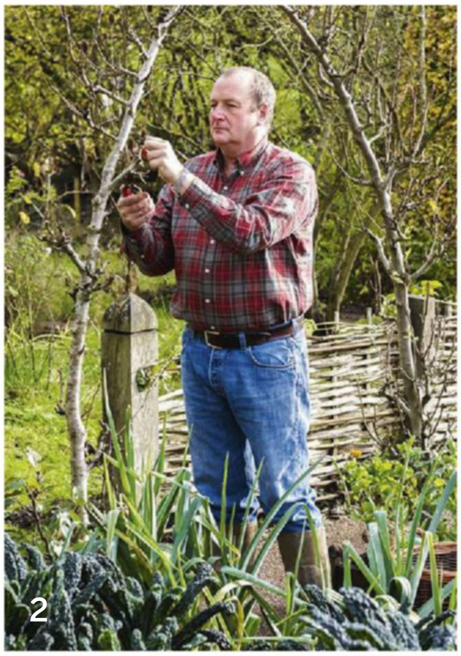
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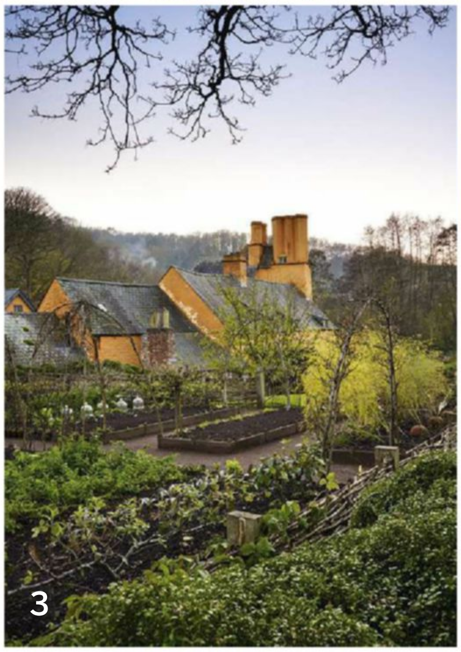
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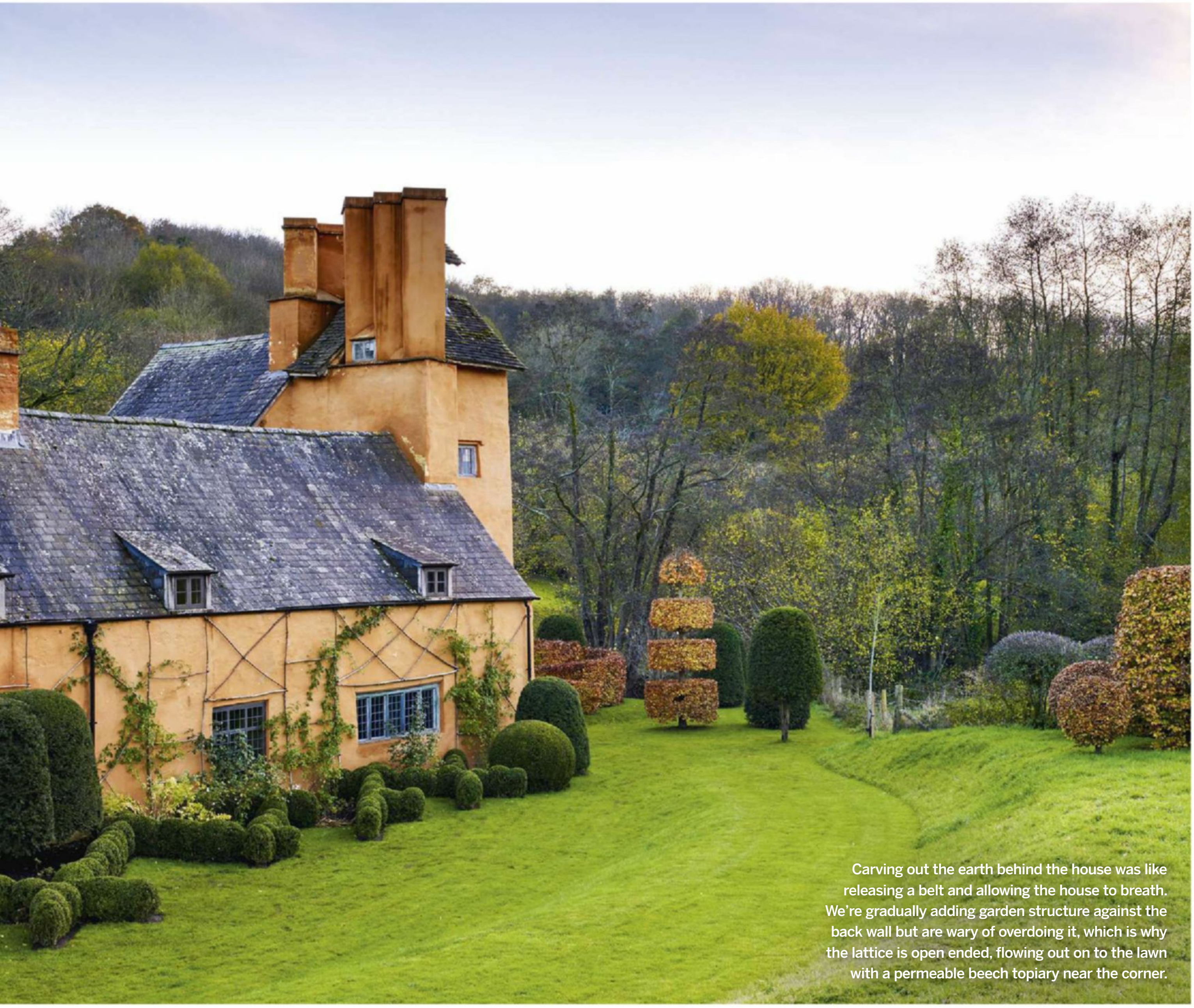
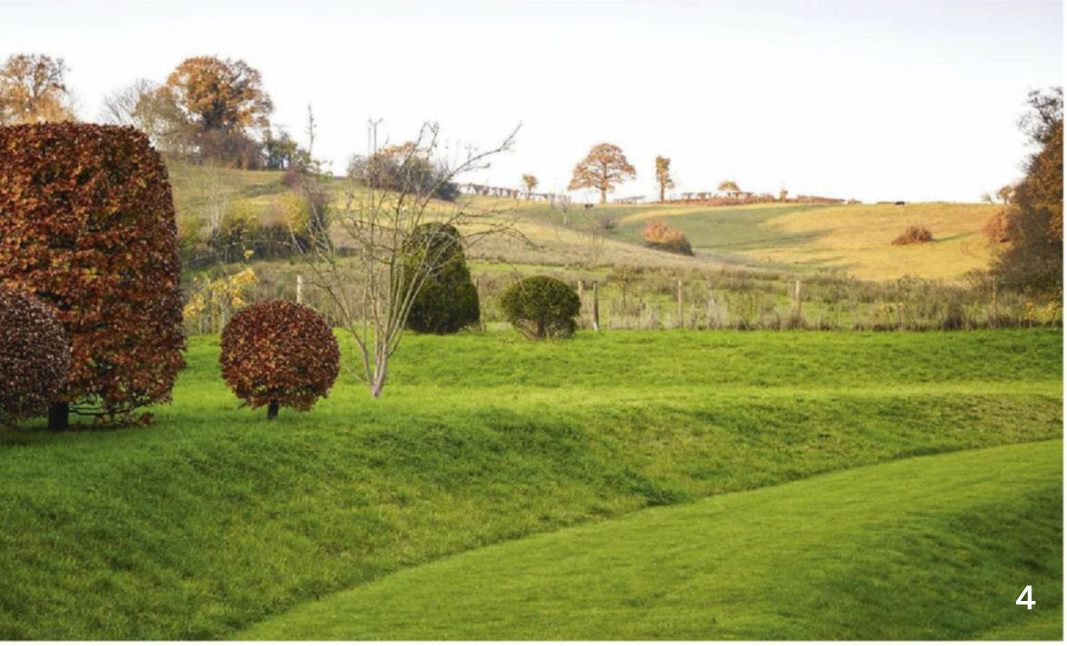


Carving out the earth behind the house was like releasing a belt and allowing the house to breath. We're gradually adding garden structure against the back wall but are wary of overdoing it, which is why the lattice is open ended, flowing out on to the lawn with a permeable beech topiary near the corner.



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Garden theatre and meadows

1 Steps cut into a steep slope form an ampitheatre where a local drama group comes to perform. The backdrop to its stage is an old granary, which is my drawing office when I work from home. We used local stone to form stepped banks and to emphasise a beautiful meander in the stream, which frames the flat, grassed stage and creates perfect acoustics for performers. Across the stream had been a precarious, scrubby bank, the base of which was constantly being undercut by the flow of the water. It was a huge task to claw out the levels but the feeling of space we gained when it was done made an enormous difference to the garden. The stream used to feel like the garden's edge; now it's the central spine.

2 Above the theatre the meadows offer views back to the house, where the topiary congregates like guests at a party; clustering as they get closer to the house. In autumn the value of the clipped beech topiary is clear, the rusty leaves are vibrant against the more stately presence of the yews and box.

3 The base of the walled stream is cobbled to protect it from erosion and to stop the water churning up under and behind the walls. We added some vertical stones to help break the flow in heavy downpours, when the water from the surrounding hills cascades into the stream. Vertical channels in the walls take removable boards with which we can dam the stream and raise the water levels.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Allt-y-bela, Llangwm Ucha, Usk, Monmouthshire NP15 1EZ.

Website arnemaynard.com

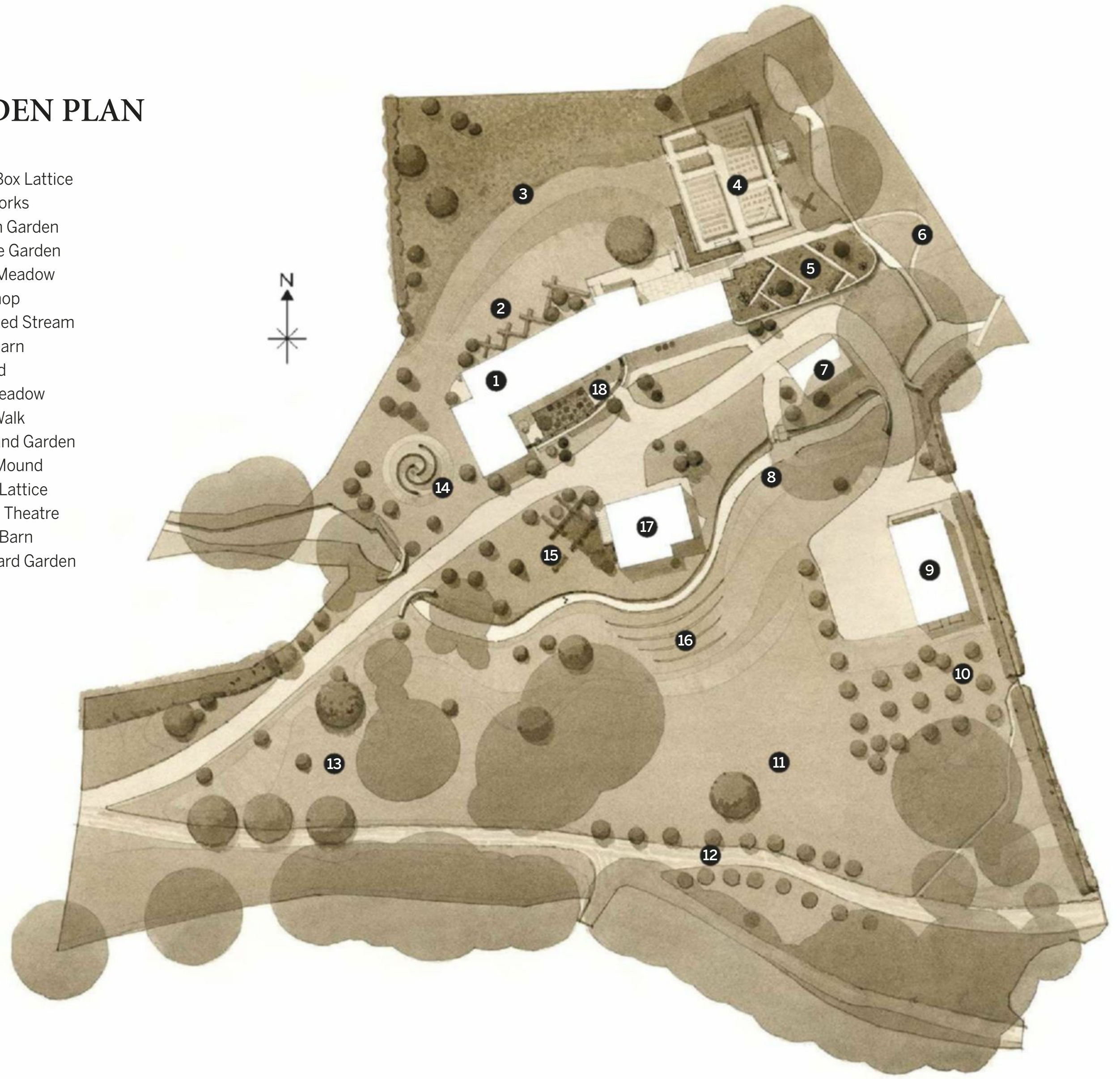
The gardens at Allt-y-bela are not open to the public, but the house offers B&B and serves as a base for Arne's courses and workshops. See website for details of these and Arne's design practice. Signed copies of Arne's new book: *The Gardens of Arne Maynard* (Merrell, £45) are also available from the website.

READER EVENT

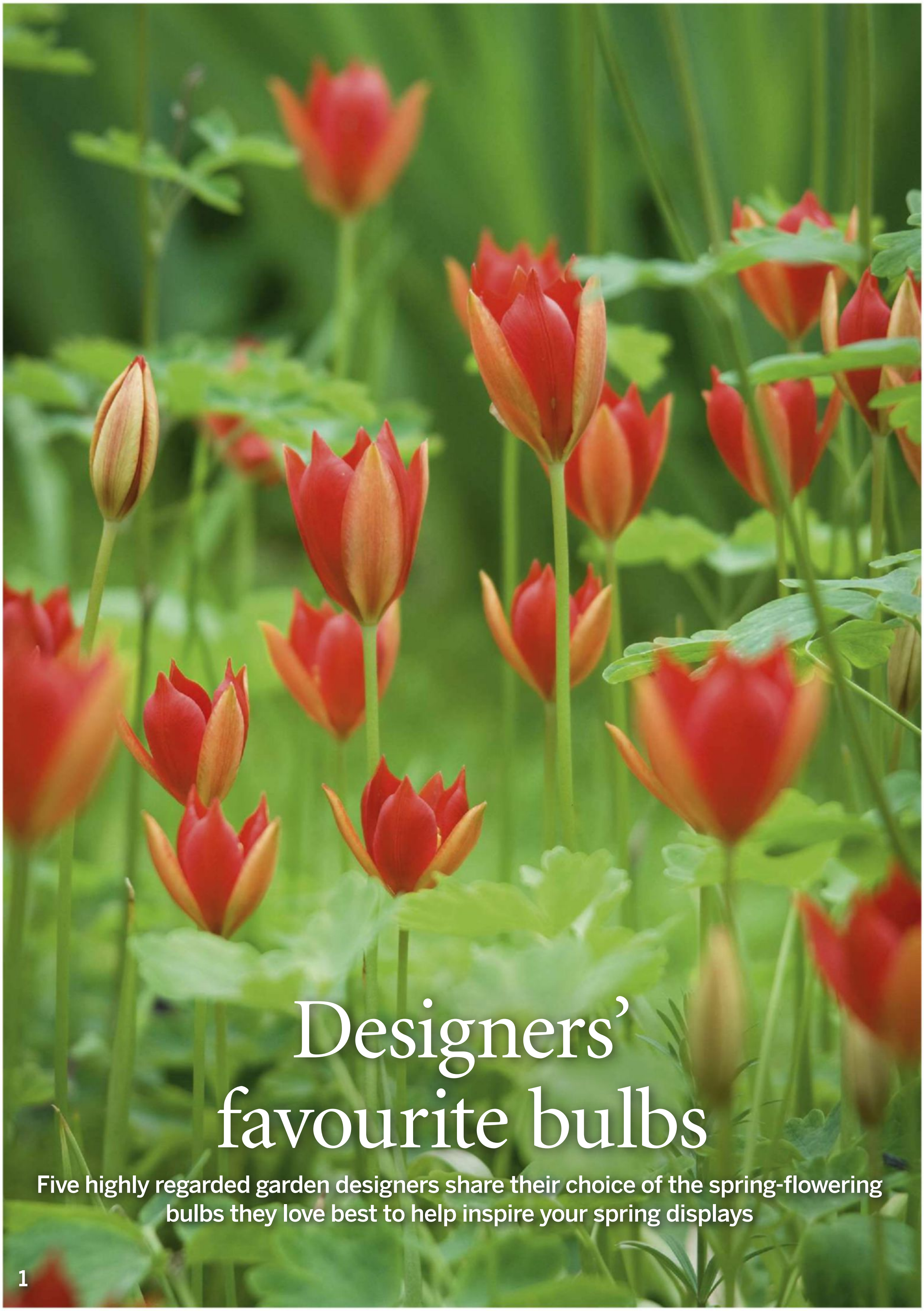
Arne Maynard will be speaking at the *Gardens Illustrated* Festival 2016. See page 9 for details or visit **gardensfestival.com**

GARDEN PLAN

1 House
2 North Box Lattice
3 Earthworks
4 Kitchen Garden
5 Cottage Garden
6 Damp Meadow
7 Workshop
8 Canalised Stream
9 Open Barn
10 Orchard
11 High Meadow
12 Hazel Walk
13 Woodland Garden
14 Spiral Mound
15 Studio Lattice
16 Garden Theatre
17 Studio Barn
18 Courtyard Garden



ARNE MAYNARD GARDENS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Designers' favourite bulbs

Five highly regarded garden designers share their choice of the spring-flowering bulbs they love best to help inspire your spring displays

1 GAP PHOTOS / HOWARD RICE

Dan Pearson

Dan is a Wisley and Kew-trained garden designer and plantsman. At RHS Chelsea this year his show garden was awarded 'Best in Show'.

1 *Tulipa sprengeri*
The latest of all tulips, flowering in early May, and unusual in its preference for damp conditions and dappled shade. Seeds freely in thin grass or among late perennials. 45cm. AGM*. RHS H6, USDA 3a-9b†.

2 *Crocus tommasinianus* 'Albus'
The pure-white form of my favourite species crocus, loved for its willingness to self-seed and naturalise. Always plant in sun or it will refuse to open to reveal a splash of yellow anthers. 12cm. USDA 3a-8b.

3 *Fritillaria meleagris*
Naturalises in damp ground and thin turf. Plant bulbs deep at 15cm, or pot up and plant out when in growth for best results. 30cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 4a-8b.

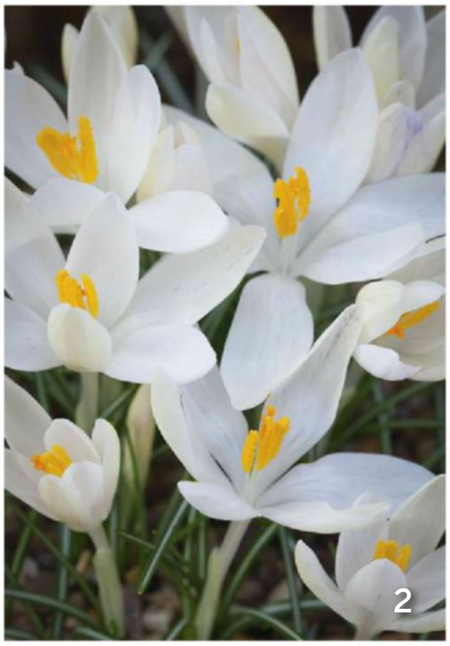
4 *Ficaria verna* 'Brazen Hussy'
Discovered by Christopher Lloyd in his woods at Great Dixter in 1976, this is hard to beat for its cheerfulness. Appears in the first weeks of spring, blinking gold over lustrous, dark foliage. Gives early ground cover and is gone by the time perennials rise to take the territory. 10cm. RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

5 *Ipheion* 'Alberto Castillo'
A clean, white selection with a dark line on the reverse of each petal. Grow in a bright, free-draining position or by a warm wall that will help protect emerging foliage. Out early and flowers for weeks. 20cm. AGM. RHS H4.

6 *Camassia leichtlinii* subsp. *leichtlinii*
Tall flower spikes rise up with the meadows as the grasses come into flower. Creamy stars fizz up the stem to stand tall and elegant above neighbours. Self-seeds riotously in open ground but pleasant in meadow grass when happy. 1.2m. USDA 5a-9b.

7 *Erythronium dens-canis*
This dog's tooth violet has a splay of inky-blue foliage, mottled as if splashed. Violet flowers fling their petals back to reveal a cinnamon speckling at their base and a push of pale stamens. Self-seeds in thin turf with spring moisture and little competition. 25cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 3a-9b.

2 MARIANNE MAJERUS GARDEN IMAGES; 3 GAP PHOTOS / HEATHER EDWARDS; 4 GARDEN WORLD IMAGES/LEE THOMAS; 5 GARDEN WORLD IMAGES / N&R COLBORN; 6 STEFFEN HAUSER / BOTANIKFOTO / ALAMY; 7 GARDENWORLD IMAGES / TREVOR SIMS



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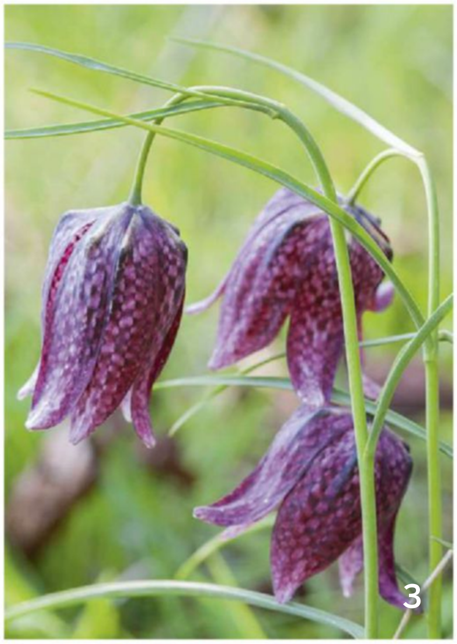

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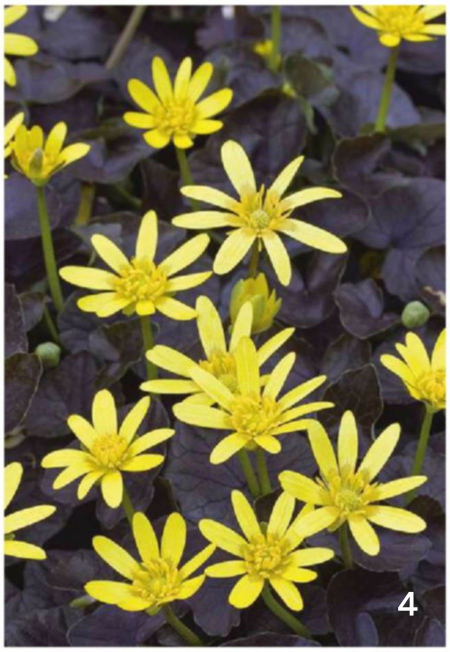

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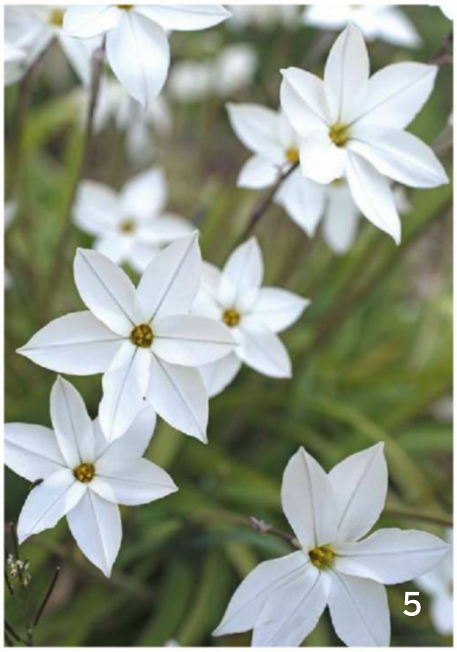

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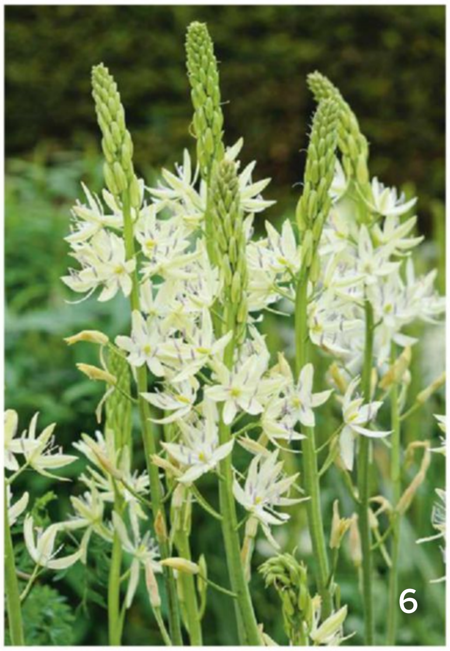

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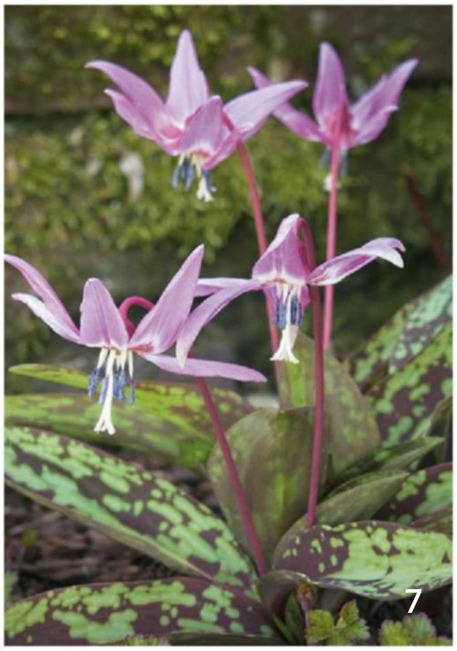

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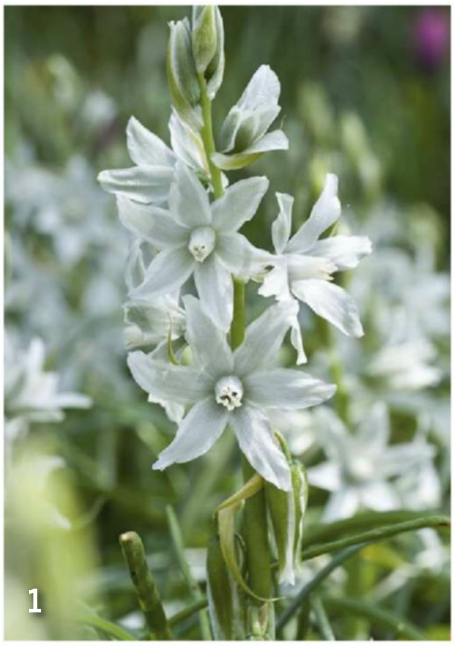
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.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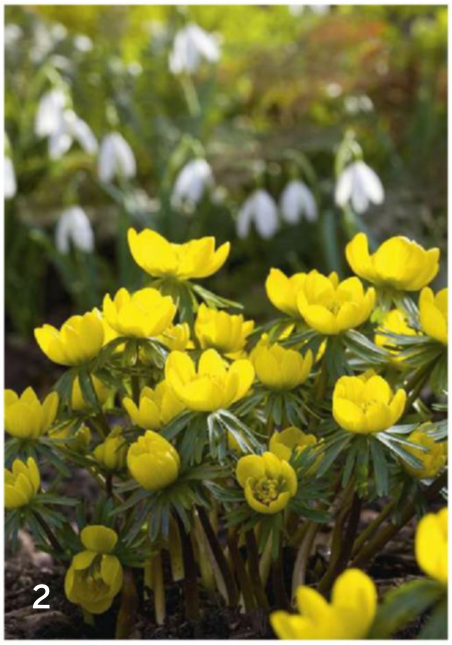
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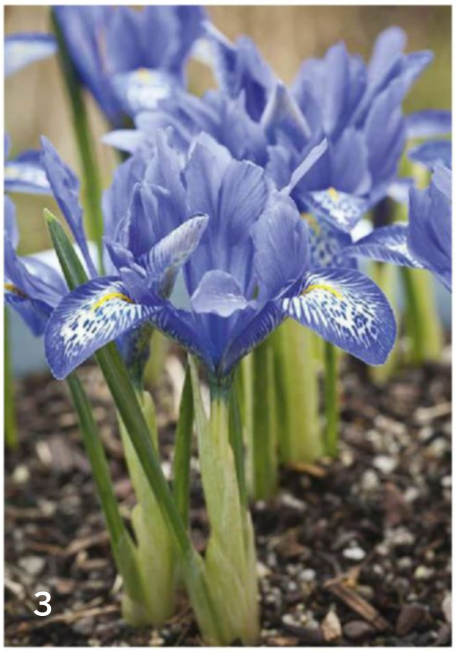
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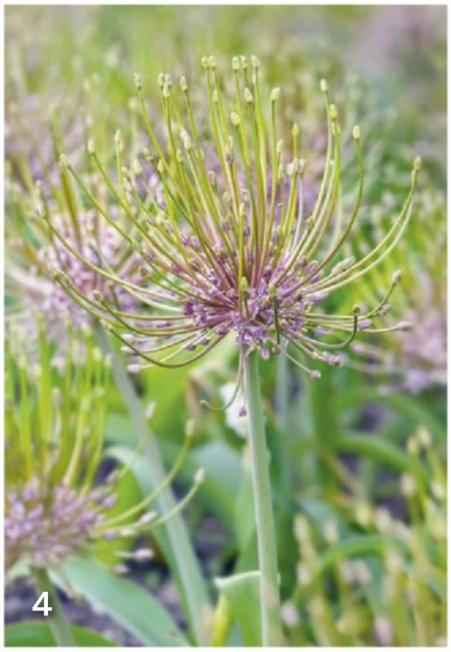
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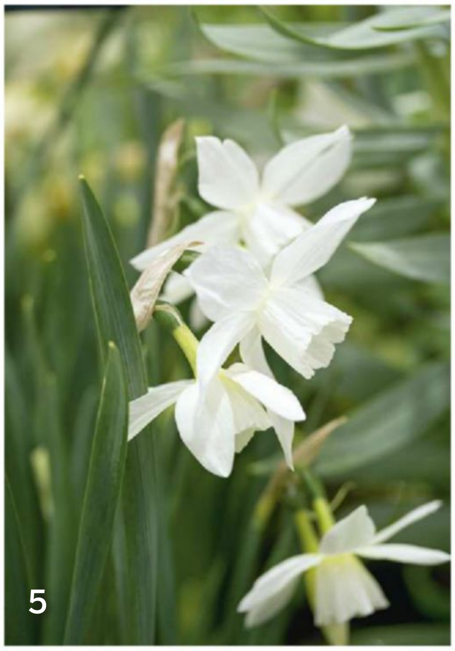
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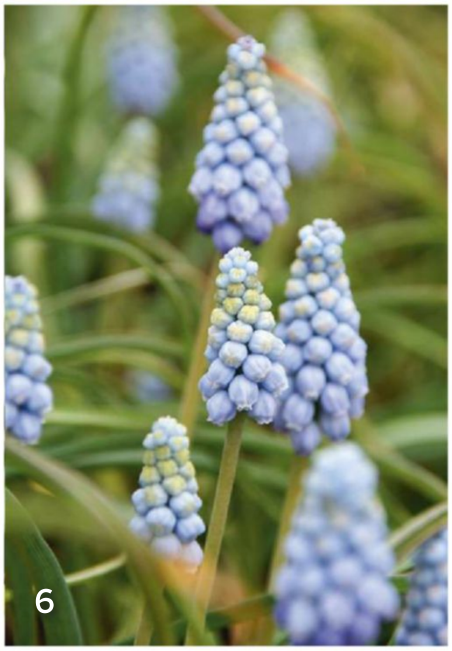
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Rosemary Alexander

Rosemary opened the internationally respected English Gardening School in 1983 and she is a regular show judge for the RHS.

1 *Ornithogalum nutans*
With silvery, grey-green, bluebell-like flowers, it is subtle and beloved by flower arrangers as it lasts well when picked. A woodlander and therefore best in well-drained light shade. Great among ferns. 22cm. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 6a-10b.

2 *Eranthis hyemalis* (Tubergenii Group) 'Guinea Gold'
This is the showiest of the *Eranthis* hybrids, flowering in February with larger flowers and a distinctive green ruff around the egg yolk-yellow flower. Long lived and best under deciduous shrubs or hedges. 8cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 3a-7b.

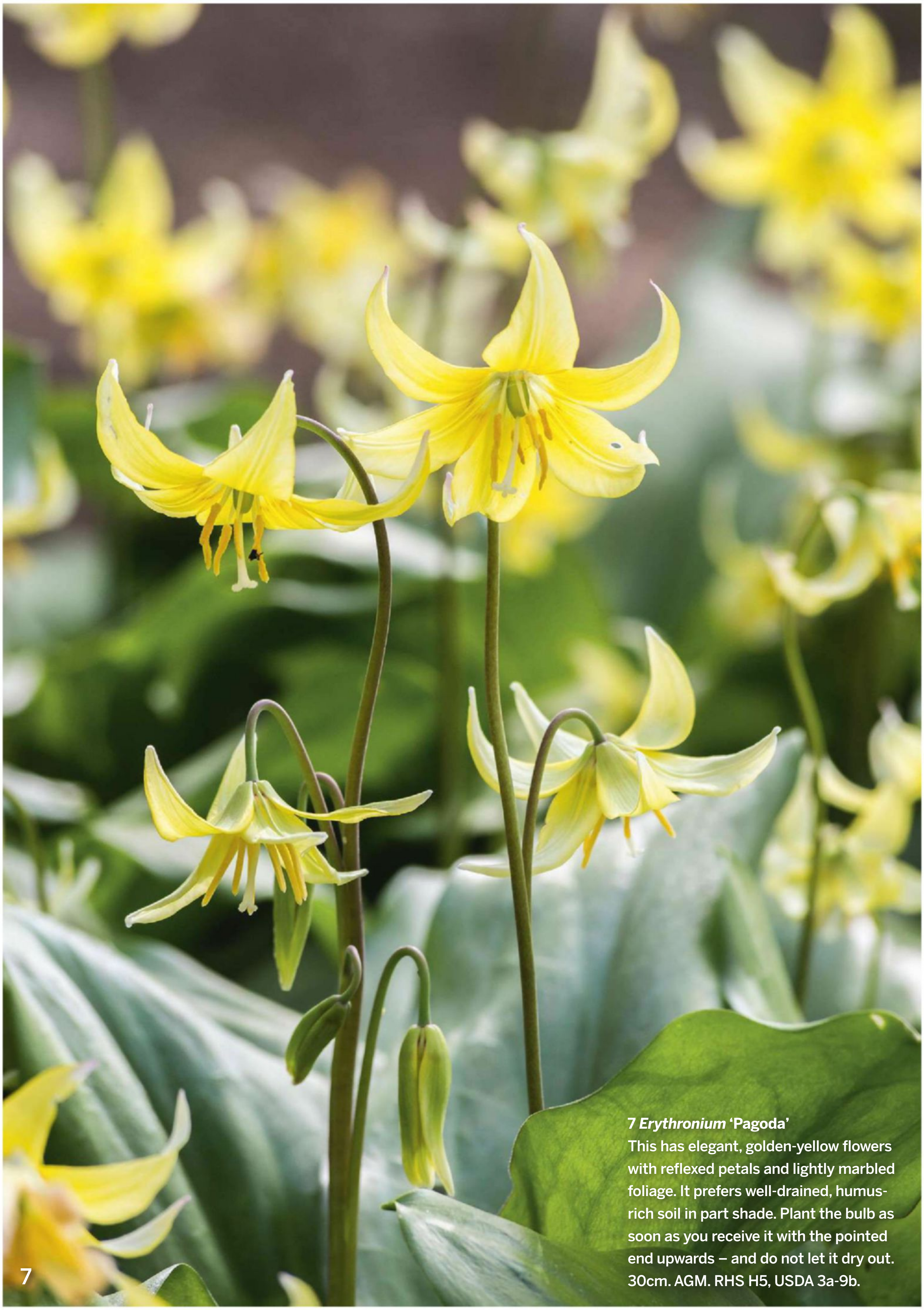
3 *Iris histrioides* 'Lady Beatrix Stanley'
This iris has rich-blue falls, with a yellow stripe in its centre. Buds poke through in February, coinciding with the last of the snowdrops. Good in gravel or under deciduous shrubs, although it's like caviar to slugs. 15cm. USDA 3a-8b.

4 *Allium schubertii*
Spectacular firework-like, spiky, pinkish-purple flower heads 30-40cm across. Good as show stoppers and to punctuate borders. Best in warm sunny position. A magnet for bees. Seedheads dry well. 45cm. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 3a-9b.

5 *Narcissus* 'Thalia'
Greeny-white and fragrant, with two or more nodding flowers per stem. A timeless and elegant classic, it flowers March to April, is vigorous and does well in light shade and acid soil. It is also long lasting when picked. 35cm. USDA 3a-8b.

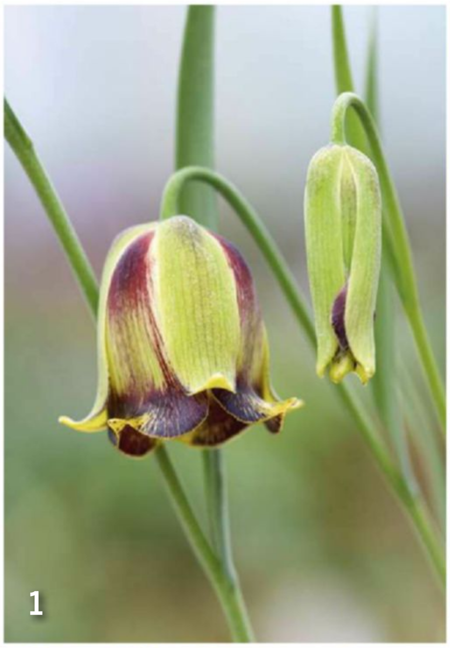
6 *Muscari armeniacum* 'Valerie Finnis'
Pale powder-blue, tightly packed spikes show up well against the slightly glaucous green leaves. This will come back in subsequent years, spreading slowly in reasonable soil in open sunny positions, or in pots or part shade. 18cm. USDA 4a-8b.

1 PREMIUM STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY GMBH / ALAMY; 2 GAP PHOTOS / JONATHAN BUCKLEY;
3 GAP PHOTOS/ROB WHITWORTH; 4 GARDEN WORLD IMAGES/CORA NIELE; 5 GARDENWORLD IMAGES/N&R COLBORN;
6 THE GARDEN COLLECTION/FLORA PRESS/CHRISTINE ANN FÖLL



7 *Erythronium* 'Pagoda'
This has elegant, golden-yellow flowers with reflexed petals and lightly marbled foliage. It prefers well-drained, humus-rich soil in part shade. Plant the bulb as soon as you receive it with the pointed end upwards – and do not let it dry out. 30cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 3a-9b.

7 GRAHAM PRENTICE / ALAMY



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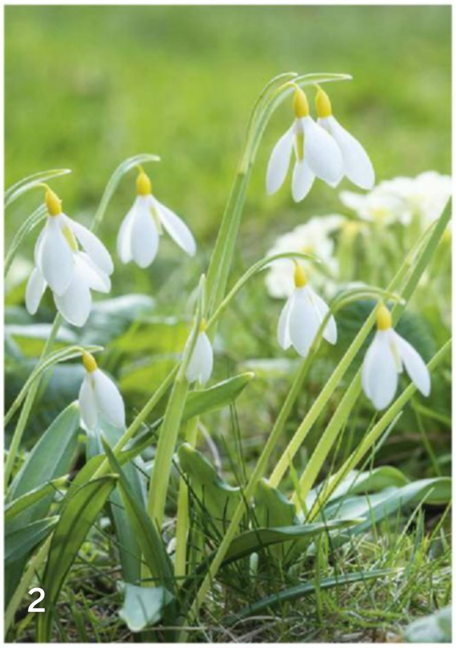

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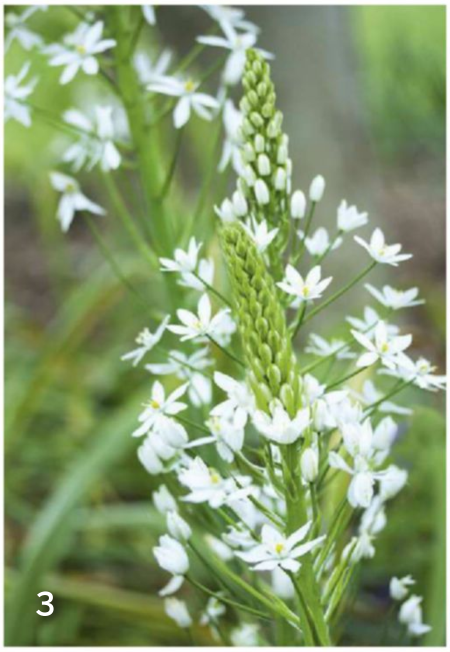

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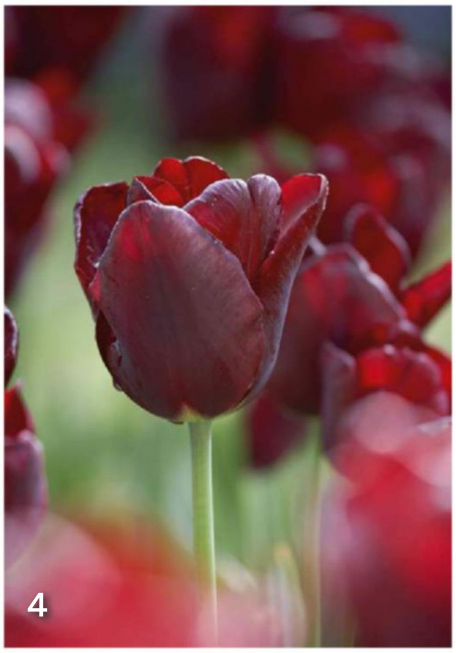

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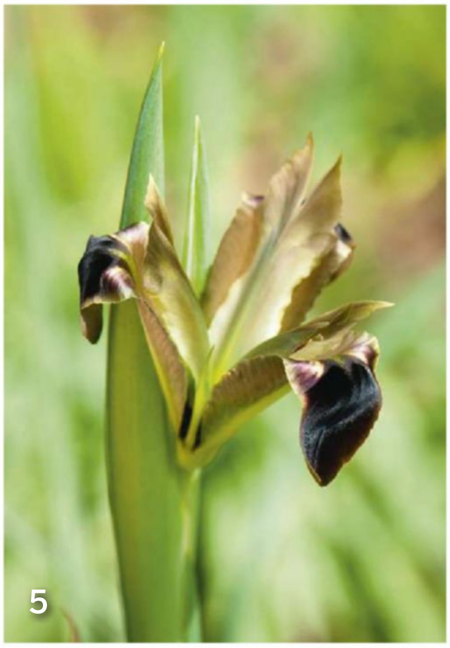

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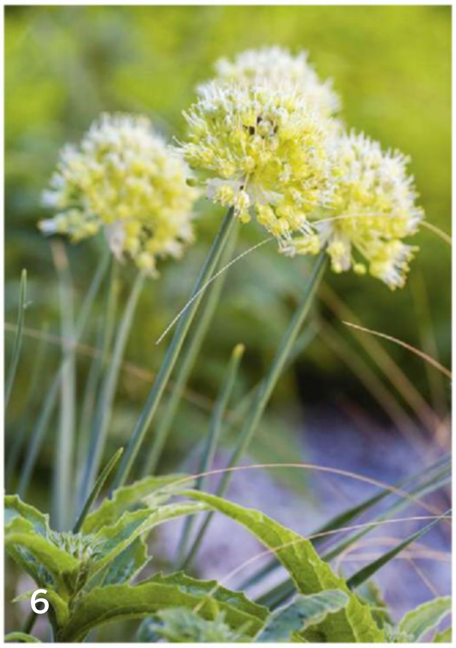

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Hannah Gardner

Kew-trained Hannah has worked at Sissinghurst and Great Dixter. She's developing her design practice and works part time as a head gardener.

1 *Fritillaria acmopetala*
These eye-catching fritillaries establish easily. Flowering is improved by a late-season feed (for next-season flowers) and light twig supports. The nodding, pale-green petals are streaked with rich maroon and reflex at the tip. They associate well with creamy, late-season narcissus. 30-40cm. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 5a-8b.

2 *Galanthus plicatus* 'Wendy's Gold'
If you are taking steps towards a snowdrop collection, this fine selection of the Crimean snowdrop *G. plicatus* is straightforward, beautiful and reliable. It has a yellow ovary and a large, yellow inner mark. 20cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 4a-9b.

3 *Ornithogalum magnum*
Whirls of delicate, white flowers are held away from a tall, stiff stem in late spring. Ideal in natural plantings, it makes a good companion to later alliums or naturalised in grass following on from *Camassia*. If happy, it will increase and roam around, without being invasive. 60cm. USDA 5a-8b.

4 *Tulipa* 'Jan Reus'
A reliable mid-season tulip, its deep ox-blood red combines with just about every hue from limes, pinks, purples to oranges. The stems are strong and the flower head compact and long lasting with an interior bowl of deep blue. 45cm. USDA 3a-7b.

5 *Iris tuberosa*
This is reliably hardy but its slender stems demand moderate shelter from winds, and it needs sun. The flowers have delicate translucent jade-green standards and compact, voluptuous falls of inky purple. It is intoxicating for its powdery scent as much as its appearance. An interesting cut flower, it partners well with late snowdrops. 15-30cm. RHS H5, USDA 7a-9b.

6 *Allium obliquum*
A very hardy and useful allium, its subtle lime-yellow flower heads appear to float above slender grey stems, and contrast well with the purples and blues of late spring. It increases into clumps and self-sows readily if happy. 80cm. USDA 4a-8b.

1 GAP PHOTOS / TORIE CHUGG; 2 GAP PHOTOS / HOWARD RICE;
3 GARDENWORLD IMAGES / TREVOR SIMS; 4 GAP PHOTOS / VISIONS;
5 CLIVE NICHOLS GARDEN PICTURES; 6 GAP PHOTOS / BJORN HANSSON

Mary Keen

A journalist and author, Mary also works as a designer with Pip Morrison, but her own garden remains her favourite project.

1 *Galanthus elwesii* 'Mrs MacNamara'
The earliest snowdrop after Christmas, which appears just when you think the garden is never going to come to life again. It is a tall, stately type and increases fast. 25-30cm. RHS H5.

2 *Anemone apennina*
I love the blue-flowered *Anemone blanda*, which does well on my limestone soil, but later and more delicate – and far harder to source – is this beautiful pale anemone. 20cm. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 6a-8b.

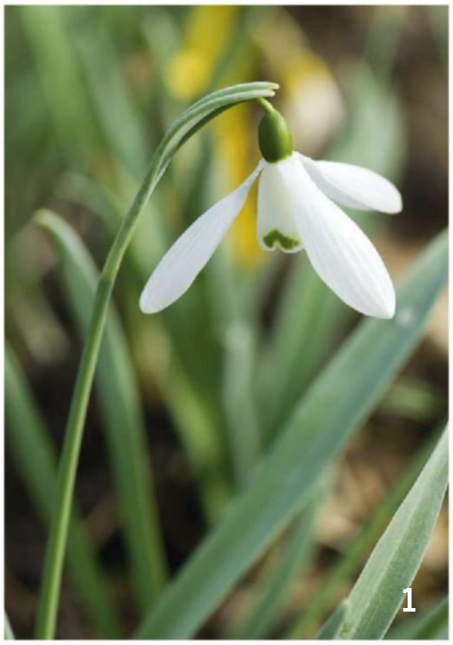
3 *Tulipa clusiana*
The species lady tulip is hard to find. One for sunny places, the named form *T.* 'Lady Jane' is lovely. *T. clusiana* 'Cynthia' has yellow inner petals rather than white, which I find less attractive with the cherry red outside of the flower. 25cm. RHS H6, USDA 3a-7b.

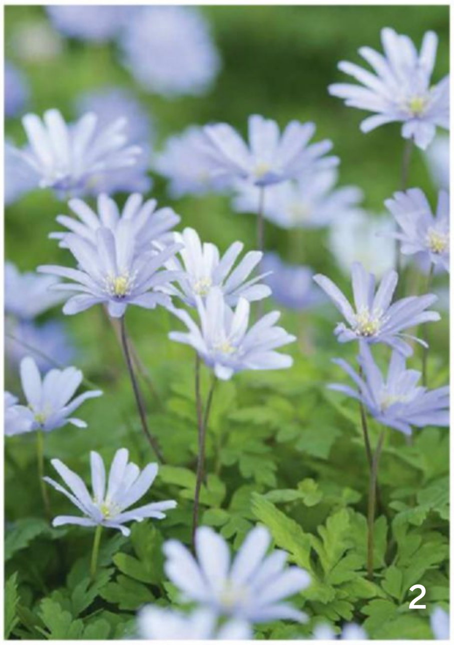
4 *Narcissus* 'Trevithian'
Egg yolk-yellow and scented, and good for picking, this jonquil lasts longer than most in the garden and has a tall and graceful form. 30cm. USDA 3a-9b.

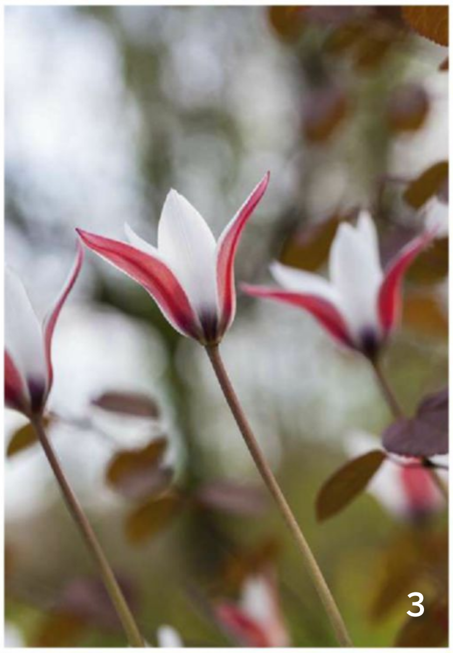
5 *Scilla bithynica*
The Turkish squill is good at Great Dixter. It likes wetter, shadier conditions than most bulbs, but there is always a risk of getting some dingy pinks included so this is not a bulb to buy on the cheap. 15cm. AGM. RHS H5.

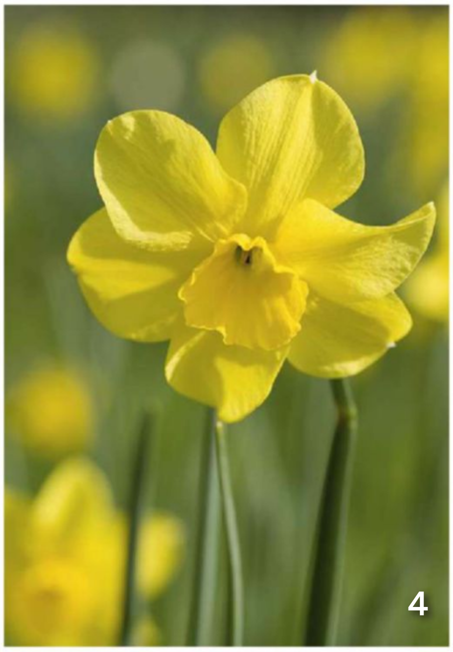
6 *Tulipa* 'Generaal de Wet'
Scented tulips are a bonus and the orange single early 'Generaal de Wet' is one of my favourites. 'Striped Bellona' is showier and later but delicious in a pot outside the front door. 45cm. USDA 3a-8b.

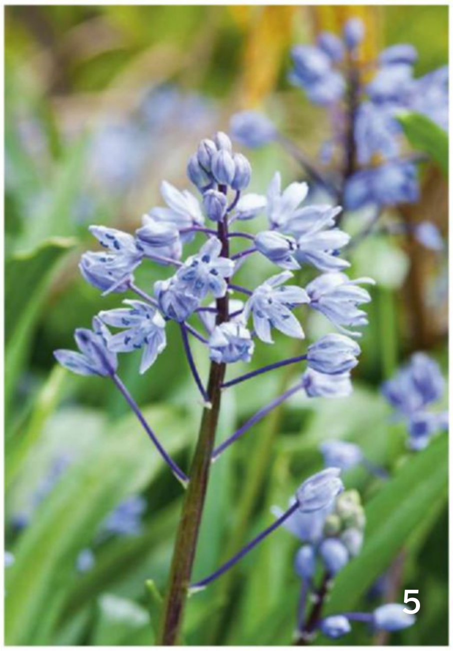
1 GAP PHOTOS / CAROLE DRAKE; 2 GAP PHOTOS / FIONA RICE; 3 THE GARDEN COLLECTION / FLORA PRESS / ANNETTE LEPPLE; 4 GAP PHOTOS / JULIETTE WADE; 5 DAVE ZUBRASKI / ALAMY; 6 ANNE GILBERT / ALAMY

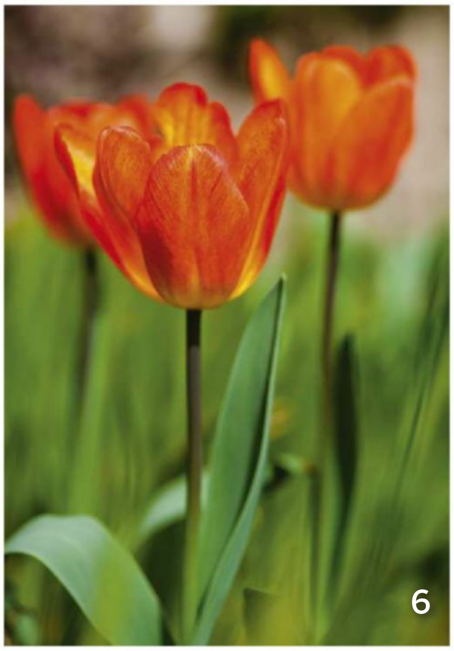


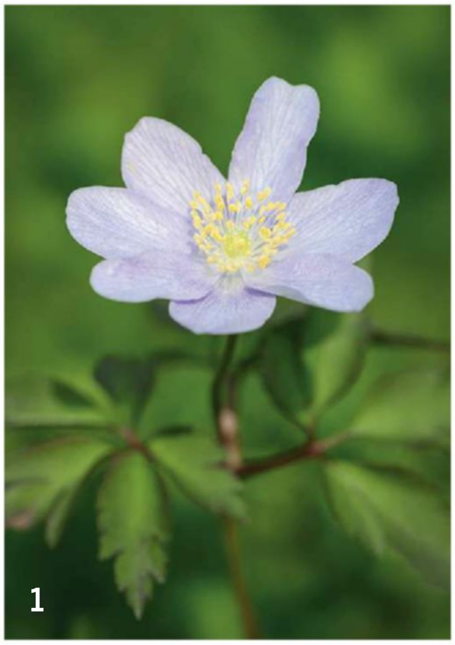












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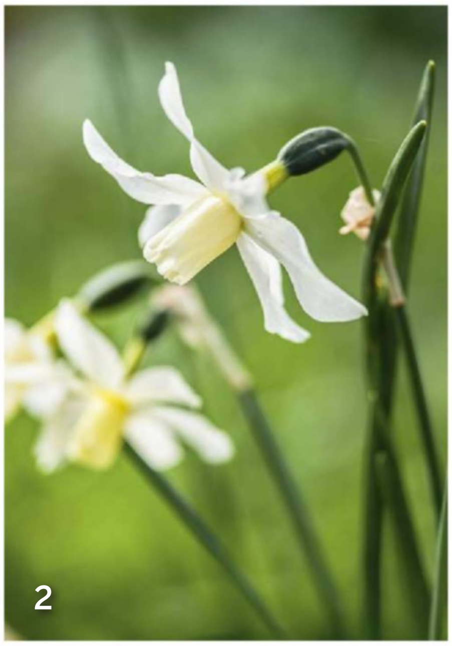

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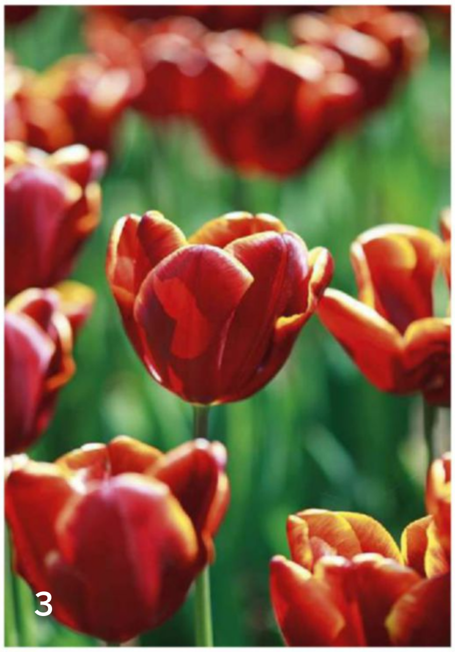

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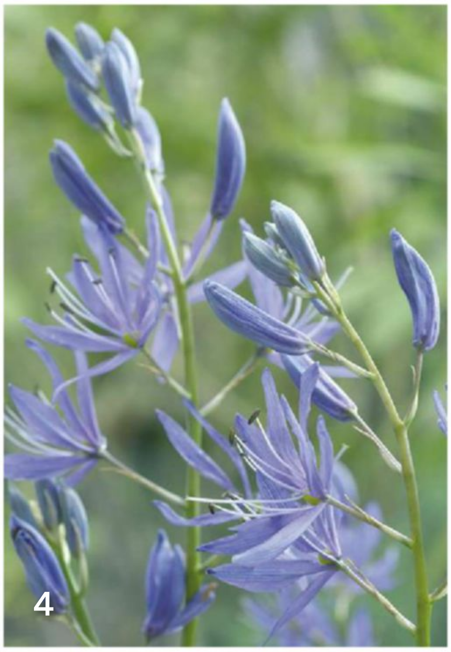

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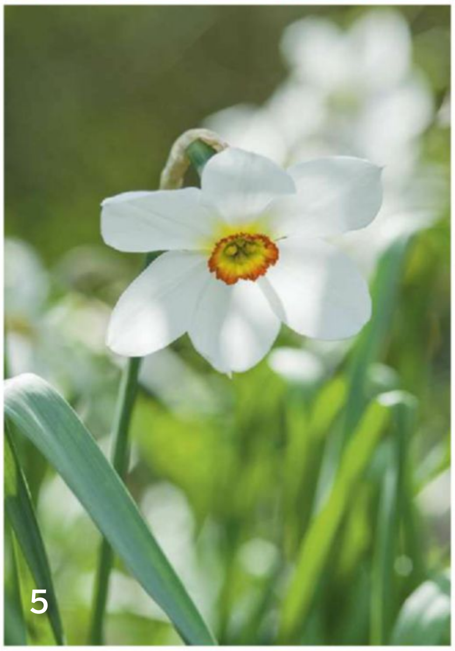

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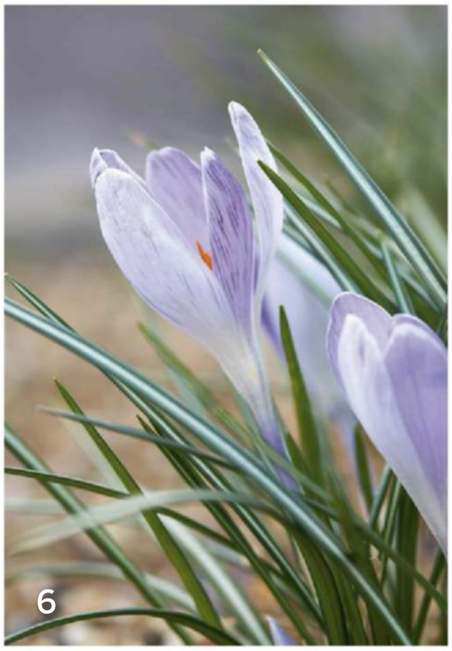

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Tom Stuart-Smith

Landscape designer Tom's current projects vary from restoring an Islamic garden in the medina of Marrakech to proposals for several public spaces in London.

1 *Anemone nemorosa* 'Robinsoniana'
This is one of the most beautiful of spring flowers in my garden. The delicate, pale lilac-blue is very lovely with the first flowers of *Epimedium* x *versicolor* 'Sulphureum' and green hellebores. 15-30cm. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.

2 *Narcissus* 'Toto'
A neat, white and graceful mid-season narcissus, which is small enough to plant in clumps through low astrantias and cranesbills, without leading one to regret the aftermath. Like a smaller *N.* 'Thalia' but with a creamy cup. 15-30cm. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-11.

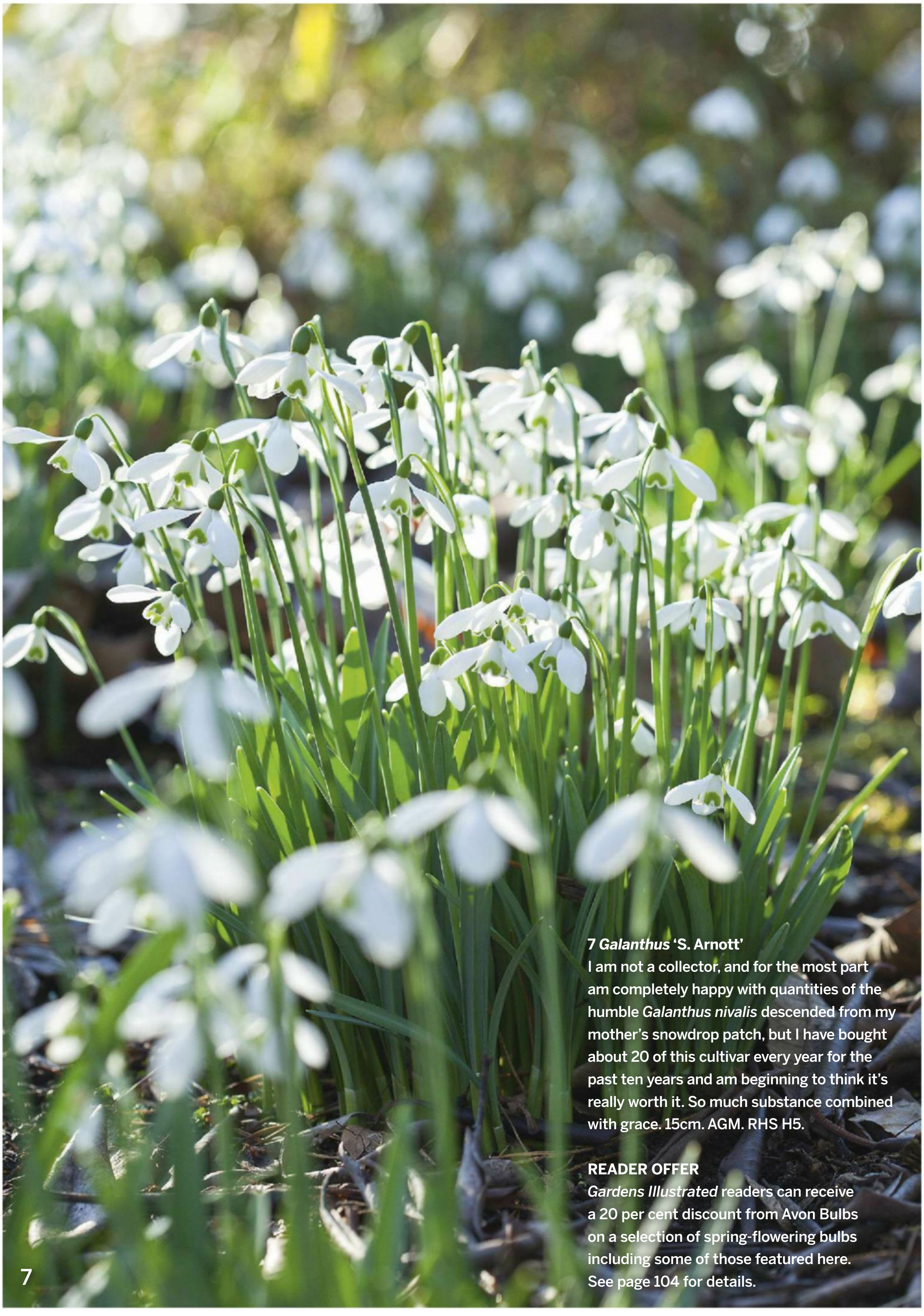
3 *Tulipa* 'Abu Hassan'
This is the perfect tulip to anchor strongly coloured cultivars, such as 'Ballerina', 'Jan Reus' or 'Paul Scherer'. I never order enough of it and never tire of its deep, rusty red, edged with amberish yellow. Think Titian paintings. 45cm. USDA 3a-8b.

4 *Camassia quamash*
Startling short spikes of dazzling blue in early June. Often recommended for grass where it is indeed very lovely, but it's also good to plant in quantity amid late emerging herbaceous perennials, such as *Thalictrum delavayi*, or even to thug it out with miscanthus. Needs moist ground. 45-60cm. USDA 4a-8b.

5 *Narcissus* 'Actaea'
This is very similar, if not quite so delicate, to the incomparable *Narcissus poeticus* var. *recurvus*, but it flowers three weeks earlier in April. Perfect for naturalising in long grass in loose drifts. 45cm. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

6 *Crocus* 'Vanguard'
As an individual flower this can't compare with the delicacy of plants, such as *Crocus sieberi* or *C. tommasinianus*, but for sheer impact it is superb. A subtle, pale violet, it is quite lovely with *Narcissus lobularis*. 15cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 3a-9b.

1 IMAGEBROKER / ALAMY; 2 FLORA PRESS/JOANNA KOSSAK; 3 FLOWERS AND GARDENS BY JAN SMITH PHOTOGRAPHY / ALAMY; 4 GARDENWORLD IMAGES / A JAMES; 5 GAP PHOTOS / HOWARD RICE; 6 GAP PHOTOS / TORIE CHUGG



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7 *Galanthus* 'S. Arnott'
I am not a collector, and for the most part am completely happy with quantities of the humble *Galanthus nivalis* descended from my mother's snowdrop patch, but I have bought about 20 of this cultivar every year for the past ten years and am beginning to think it's really worth it. So much substance combined with grace. 15cm. AGM. RHS H5.

READER OFFER
Gardens Illustrated readers can receive a 20 per cent discount from Avon Bulbs on a selection of spring-flowering bulbs including some of those featured here. See page 104 for details.

7 GAP PHOTOS / ROB WHITWORTH

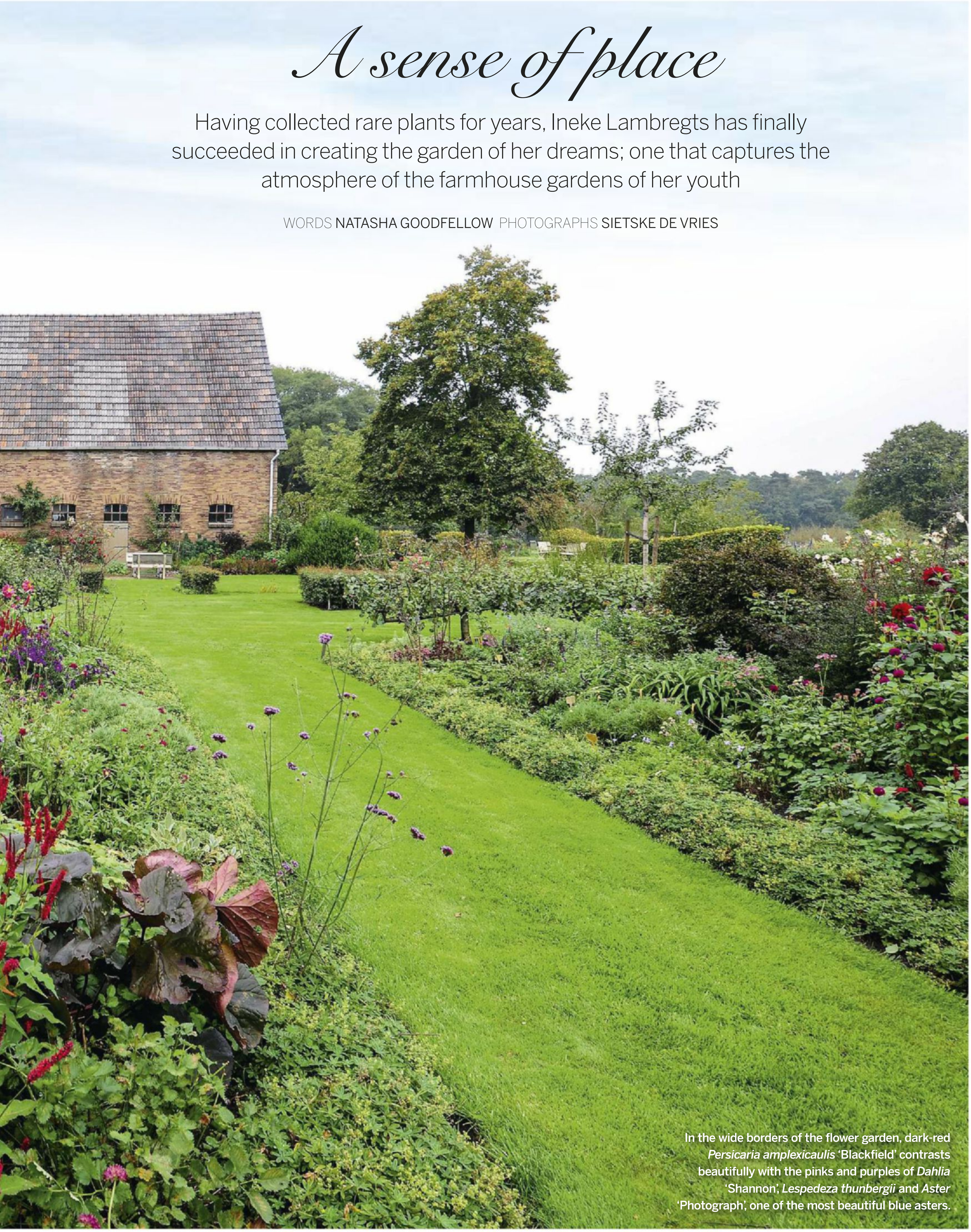
In brief

Name De Jorissenhoeve.
What Traditional-style Dutch farmhouse garden.
Where Schijf, the Netherlands.
Size 17.5 acres in total including woodland and meadows.
Soil Very poor sand, now much improved with organic matter.
Climate Surrounding forest creates a microclimate, which means winters are generally colder, and summers warmer, than the rest of the Netherlands. Very little wind.
Hardiness rating USDA 8.

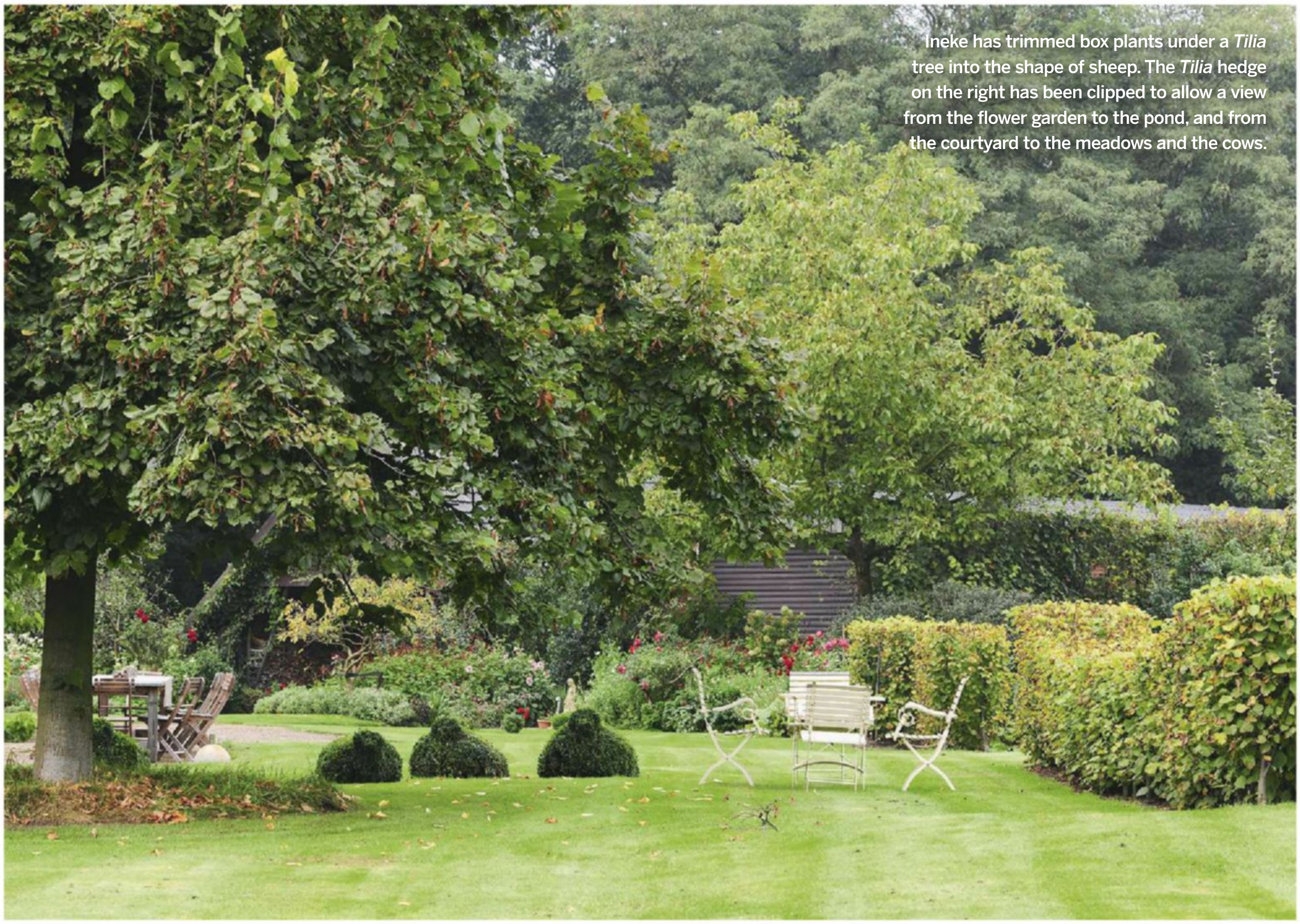
A sense of place

Having collected rare plants for years, Ineke Lambregts has finally succeeded in creating the garden of her dreams; one that captures the atmosphere of the farmhouse gardens of her youth

WORDS **NATASHA GOODFELLOW** PHOTOGRAPHS **SIETSKE DE VRIES**



In the wide borders of the flower garden, dark-red *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Blackfield' contrasts beautifully with the pinks and purples of *Dahlia* 'Shannon', *Lespedeza thunbergii* and *Aster* 'Photograph', one of the most beautiful blue asters.



Ineke has trimmed box plants under a *Tilia* tree into the shape of sheep. The *Tilia* hedge on the right has been clipped to allow a view from the flower garden to the pond, and from the courtyard to the meadows and the cows.

It is ironic that Ineke Lambregts' first memory of gardening was of plucking a hydrangea flower and sticking it in her sandpit, only for it to wilt within the hour. "It was in the garden at my parents' farm. I still remember the smell of the roses and the lilacs, the butterflies on the asters and the first spring flowers," she explains. "And I just couldn't understand why my lovely flower had died."

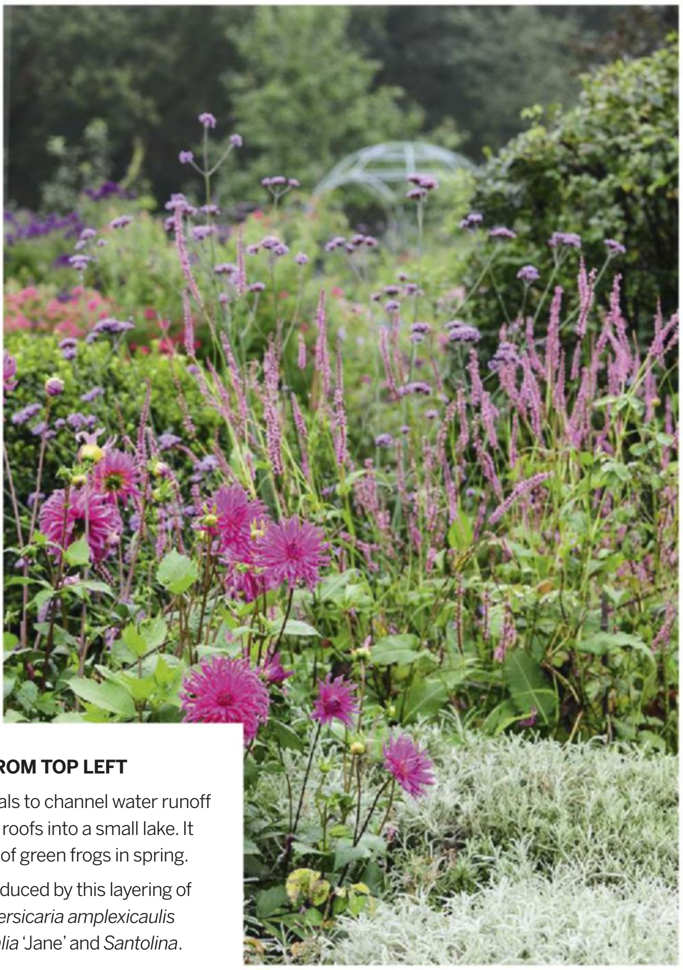
Fifty-odd years later, chased out of her previous highly regarded garden at Etten-Leur in the south of the Netherlands by the threat of nearby development, she found herself trying to recreate the garden idyll of her youth on soil so poor it was barely better than the contents of that very sandpit. "In my previous garden the soil was wonderful, and I did wonder whether I'd be able to grow anything at all here," says Ineke of her new home, de Jorissenhoeve, a listed 1930s farmhouse in the village of Schijf, close to the Belgian border.

Faced with this dilemma, many of us would simply start again, selecting plants more suitable for the new conditions. But not Ineke, who has spent her life collecting the plants she remembers from her childhood. Working as a laboratory assistant ("that really taught me to observe," she says) and with a keen interest in nature, she took every chance to visit other gardens and specialist nurseries; even, back in the 1980s, travelling the length of the country to track down *Alchemilla mollis*. Madeleine van Bennekom, who pioneered open gardens in the Netherlands was a big influence. "I was very impressed to see her perennial borders and her collection of old roses and plants I thought didn't exist any more," says Ineke.

All Ineke's treasured acquisitions – including a cutting of *Artemisia abrotanum* given to her by Madeleine van Bennekom herself – found a place in the garden she made with her husband Ad on her marriage. Listed in the prestigious Dutch Garden Foundation book, it enjoyed considerable acclaim, but Ineke is modest. "It was a nice garden with garden rooms, but it didn't have the atmosphere and layout of the old farm gardens I had known. It was too urban."

De Jorissenhoeve then was the opportunity she had been waiting for, and in April 2010, 27 lorry loads of Ineke's precious plants (by contrast the family's furniture occupied a mere two) made their way to the farm – but not before Ineke had cleared the concrete yard and begun an intensive programme of soil improvement. "We added – and are still adding – as much organic matter as we possibly can," she says. "It's an ongoing process."

Now, just five years on, the garden not only looks as if it belongs to the house and the landscape, it is of course far more mature than if Ineke had started from scratch. A lush lawn leads from the house to the step-over espaliered apples that mark the entrance to the flower garden. This is overflowing with densely planted peonies, poppies, dahlias, old roses and persicaria, interspersed with handsome clumps of *Santolina rosmarinifolia* subsp. *canescens* and the even finer-leaved ▷



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

Ineke created two mini canals to channel water runoff from the buildings’ steep roofs into a small lake. It now attracts thousands of green frogs in spring.

Ineke loves the effect produced by this layering of *Verbena bonariensis*, *Persicaria amplexicaulis* ‘September Spires’, *Dahlia* ‘Jane’ and *Santolina*.

The red and white borders by the wood store feature *Salvia officinalis* ‘Albiflora’ and climbing rose *R.* ‘Glorie van Roosendaal’, a present to the family from the neighbourhood association when they moved in.

Ineke remembers buying this *Juglans regia* ‘Purpurea’, a rare, dark-leaved walnut tree, when her son Anthony (now 25) was a baby. She has paired it with *Berberis thunbergii* f. *atropurpurea* ‘Atropurpurea Nana’.

Ineke and Ad hope to reinstate the original paving to this area in front of the house. Low box hedges enclose *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'High Society' with *Dahlia* 'Fashion Monger', *Rosa* 'Cornelia' and an apple tree.

▷ *Santolina neapolitana*. Most of the plants are scented – "If I could ever create a perfume, it would be from *Chimonanthus praecox*," says Ineke – and many, including *Salvia officinalis* 'Purpurascens', *Berberis thunbergii* f. *atropurpurea* 'Atropurpurea Nana' and *Juglans regia* 'Purpurea', the rare, dark-leaved walnut tree, have been chosen to complement the purple-brown tones in the slate and brick of the farm buildings. Repeated plantings of *Rosa glauca* are used to complement the grey-green of the paintwork.

A white border by the lake, positioned to stand out against the forest behind, sparkles with sand-loving *Crambe cordifolia*, *Ageratina altissima* and *Valeriana officinalis*; while the red and white borders by the wood store and machinery barn behind echo the traditional plantings of farmhouses of the 1930s.

Tilia and *Crataegus* hedges provide some structure ("evergreens would look out of place here," says Ineke), but the garden is largely open and relaxed, dotted with old-fashioned fruit trees and allowing unimpeded views of the family's small herd of charmingly striped Dutch Belted (Lakenvelder) cows munching contentedly in the meadows beyond.

It is a tranquil, beautiful place that, just as Ineke wanted, looks as if it has been here for years, centuries even. In part that is down to her authentic plant selection and placement, and in part it is down to her hard work on the soil. Undoubtedly though, it is also down to her love and expert care, making sure her plants survived the move. An apple tree whose trunk she lovingly bandaged and sprayed every day for months to help its water uptake is a case in point. "I saw the first leaf on my birthday in July," she smiles. "It was the best present ever." □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address De Jorissenhoeve, Achtmaalsebaan 17, Schijf, the Netherlands.

Email tuineke@gmail.com

Open De Jorissenhoeve is open to the public 26-27 September 2015. For other dates see facebook.com/DeJorissenhoeve

9 of Ineke's favourite autumn plants

1 *Symphoricarpos* Magical Candy (='Kolmcan')
A beautifully coloured snowberry shrub that Ineke likes to pair with hydrangeas and pink roses. She cuts it back hard in February to keep it under control. 1.5m.

2 *Dahlia* 'Downham Royal'
A richly coloured dahlia that reminds Ineke of an allium. She pairs it with *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'September Spires'. 1.2m.

3 *Diascia personata*
Taller growing than many diascias, this flowers over a long season. It needs well-drained soil, in order to keep the roots dry over winter. 1m.

4 *Achillea ptarmica* 'Aunt Stientje'
A dwarf form that Ineke loves for its simplicity, and uses it in the white border behind the pond. 80cm.

5 *Clematis texensis* 'Gravetye Beauty'
An elegant, late-flowering clematis with slim, almost tulip-like flowers that open widely in a gorgeous colour. 2.5m.

6 *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Alba'
Unlike many persicarias this doesn't spread so Ineke divides it to bulk it up, and uses alongside white phlox. 1.2m.

7 *Tricyrtis formosana* 'Purple Beauty'
Also known as 'poor man's orchid', this plant has an attractive delicacy and does well in shade. 50cm.

8 *Dahlia* 'Orfeo'
A dahlia Ineke thinks has the shape of a spider, and which makes a cheerful addition to the border, especially in autumn when, she says, you don't want colours that are too soft. 1.1m.

9 *Lespedeza thunbergii*
Masses of pretty flowers appear in August, causing the branches of this sub shrub to arch over in a fountain of purplish-pink colour. Ineke likes to grow it over phlox. In winter, when its branches start to curl, she brings branches indoors and hangs Christmas decorations from them. 1.8m. AGM*. RHS H5, USDA 4a-9b†.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.

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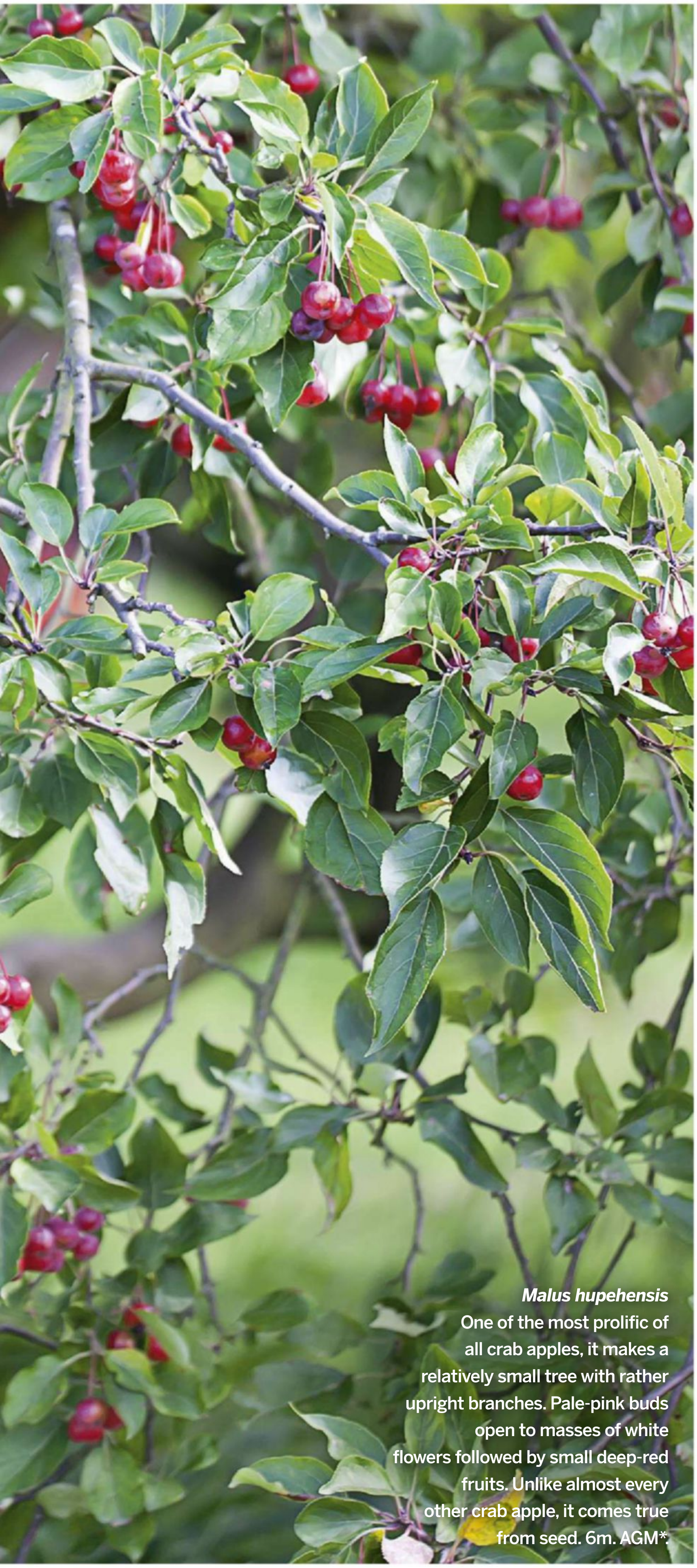
In brief

What Around 40 species and hundreds of hybrids and selections of deciduous large shrubs and small trees.
Origins From temperate regions throughout the northern hemisphere where they grow in open woods and woodland edges.
Season April and May (flowers), September – December (fruits).
Size Grow to a height of 2-15m, depending on choice of rootstock.
Conditions Any fertile soil that is not parched or waterlogged. Sun, or partial or dappled shade.
Hardiness ratings RHS H6, USDA 4a-7b.

Crab apples

Perhaps the perfect tree for a small garden, crab apples are compact in height and spread. In spring clouds of blossom can't fail to lift your spirits, while fruits and foliage provide rich autumnal colour

WORDS **GRAHAM RICE** PHOTOGRAPHS **DIANNA JAZWINSKI**



Malus hupehensis
One of the most prolific of all crab apples, it makes a relatively small tree with rather upright branches. Pale-pink buds open to masses of white flowers followed by small deep-red fruits. Unlike almost every other crab apple, it comes true from seed. 6m. AGM*.

Graham Rice is a Kew-trained garden writer, blogger and photographer who lives and works in both the UK and the USA.

When you spot a crab apple tree in a country hedgerow, what is it that you're looking at? It may seem like an odd question, but the answer is interesting – because if you're looking at a tree in the wild you're probably not looking at a crab apple at all. The British native crab apple, *Malus sylvestris*, is an unexpectedly rare tree found in old hedgerows and thin but well-established woods. What you're more likely to see in hedgerows are actually descendants of named cultivars of cooking and eating apples, *M. domestica*, grown in orchards and gardens.

This is because in medieval times cultivated apple trees for eating and cider making were often planted in hedgerows and the corners of fields, and in many areas these cultivated apple trees hybridised with the native crab apples. It's often their genetic influence can still be seen in what at first sight seem to be native crab apples.

However, if you look closely you'll see the difference: crab apples have crowns that are denser than those of culinary apples; the twigs are spiny and downy, while those of culinary apples are spine free and smooth. Crab apple tree leaves are usually about one third of the size of those of culinary apples and mature crab apple trees also tend to be smaller. The fruits of native crab apples also tend to be small, often 2-3cm across, sour and as hard as stones, at least until well into winter.

Few of the crab apples we grow in gardens are descended from our native crab apple (*M. sylvestris*), most are derived from one or more of the 40 other wild species that grow in the temperate regions of Europe, Asia and North America. They make large shrubs or small trees, flowering prolifically, colourfully and often fragrantly in white, pink or purple in spring or early summer. Those with red flower buds opening to white flowers are the most dramatic in flower.

Some crab apples also feature attractive bronzed or purplish foliage in its early ▷

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.

▷ phases, as well as golden or orange autumn leaf colour, which in some cultivars can be spectacular.

The autumn crop of colourful fruits often lasts well into the winter, birds seem to leave them until last. Fruits can be small, some little more than 10mm across, but a few are as large as 5cm and weigh down the branches impressively. In colour they can be yellow, golden, orange, scarlet to crimson red as well as dark purple and the yellow and orange fruits may be overlaid with pink or red. The colour can vary a little with light levels but is nevertheless a convenient way to group them as we have done here.

Crab apples are perhaps the finest of all trees for a small garden, maturing to a manageable size and providing two, sometimes more, distinct seasonal features. They flower even when young, often blooming when two or three years old, and are invaluable as pollinators for culinary cultivars. As with culinary apples, crab apples are available grafted on to a variety of rootstocks that will control their eventual size; and it is important when choosing to be aware of the eventual height of the tree, which can vary from 2m after ten years to 4m or more.

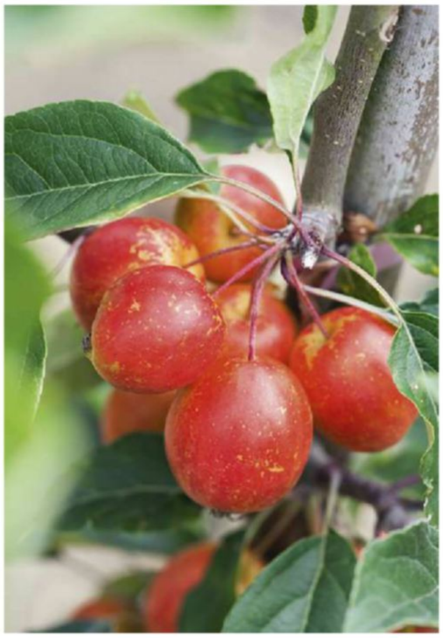
Most mail-order suppliers will indicate the rootstock on to which their crab apples are grafted and also give a guide to the height of a mature tree. Some nurseries provide a range of options. Crab apples can also be grown in large containers, and for this use it is best to choose plants grafted on to the dwarfing M27 rootstock.

When choosing cultivars of eating and cooking apples, you need to plant two, sometimes three, different ones that flower at the same time to ensure cross pollination and a good crop. Crab apples, however, are self fertile. Indeed, they have a longer flowering season than culinary apples – and produce up to ten times as much pollen – so one crab apple tree can serve as pollinator for a wide range of culinary apple varieties.

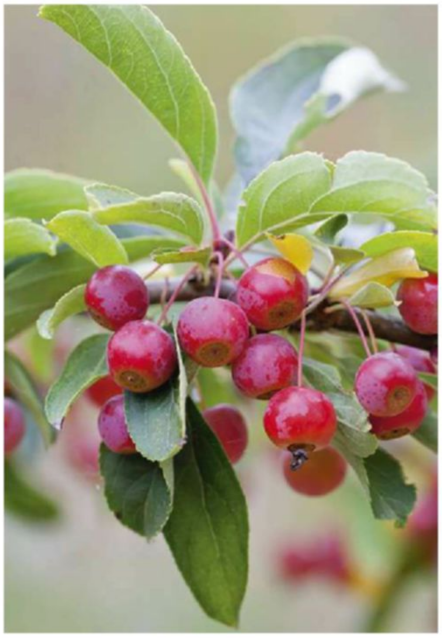
This means if you have at least one crab apple tree neither you nor your neighbours need worry about the pollination of your culinary apples. The crab apple will do the job – as well as providing clouds of spring blossom and long lasting autumn and winter fruits.

• Graham's recommendations for crab apple trees continue over the next six pages.

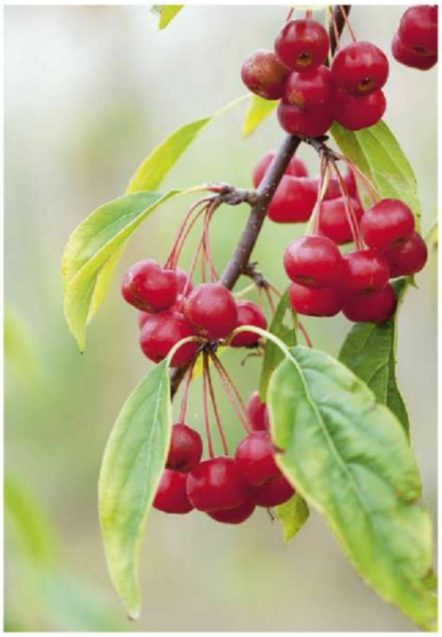
Orange and red fruits



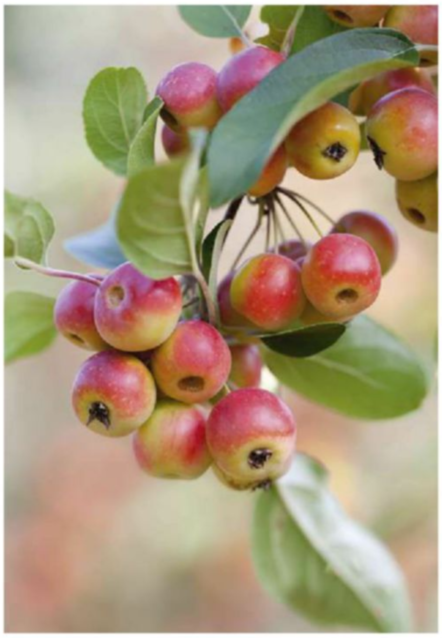
***M.* 'John Downie'**
Discovered in Staffordshire in 1875 and considered the finest of crab apples. Produces white flowers, orange-red fruits and fiery autumn foliage. Its upright narrow growth is valued where space is tight. 10m.



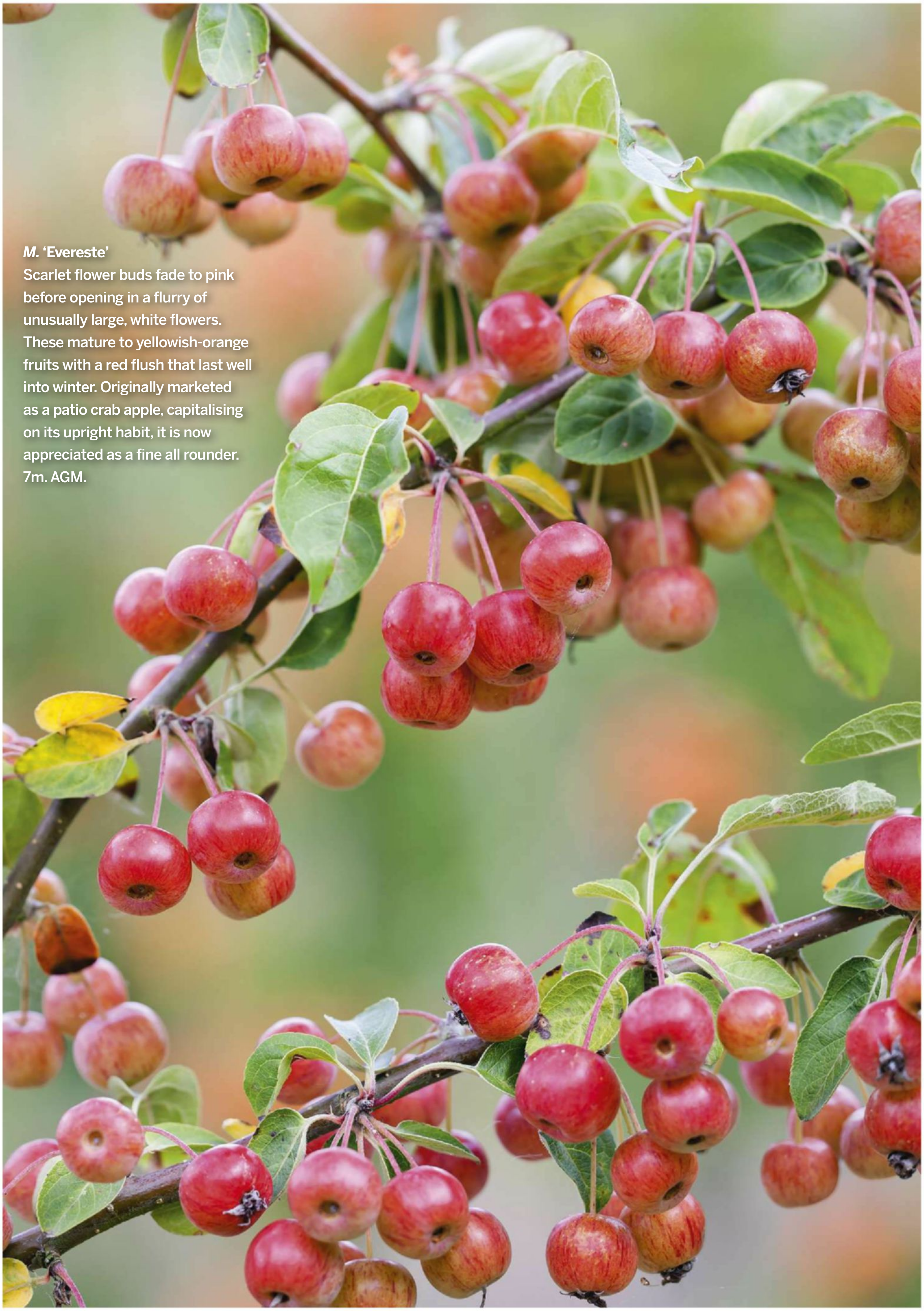
***M.* Sugar Tyme (='Sutyzam')**
Pale-pink buds open to white flowers. Glossy red fruits are small, but make an impressive display among autumn leaves. Noted for its excellent resistance to scab, it copes well with other diseases too. 6m.



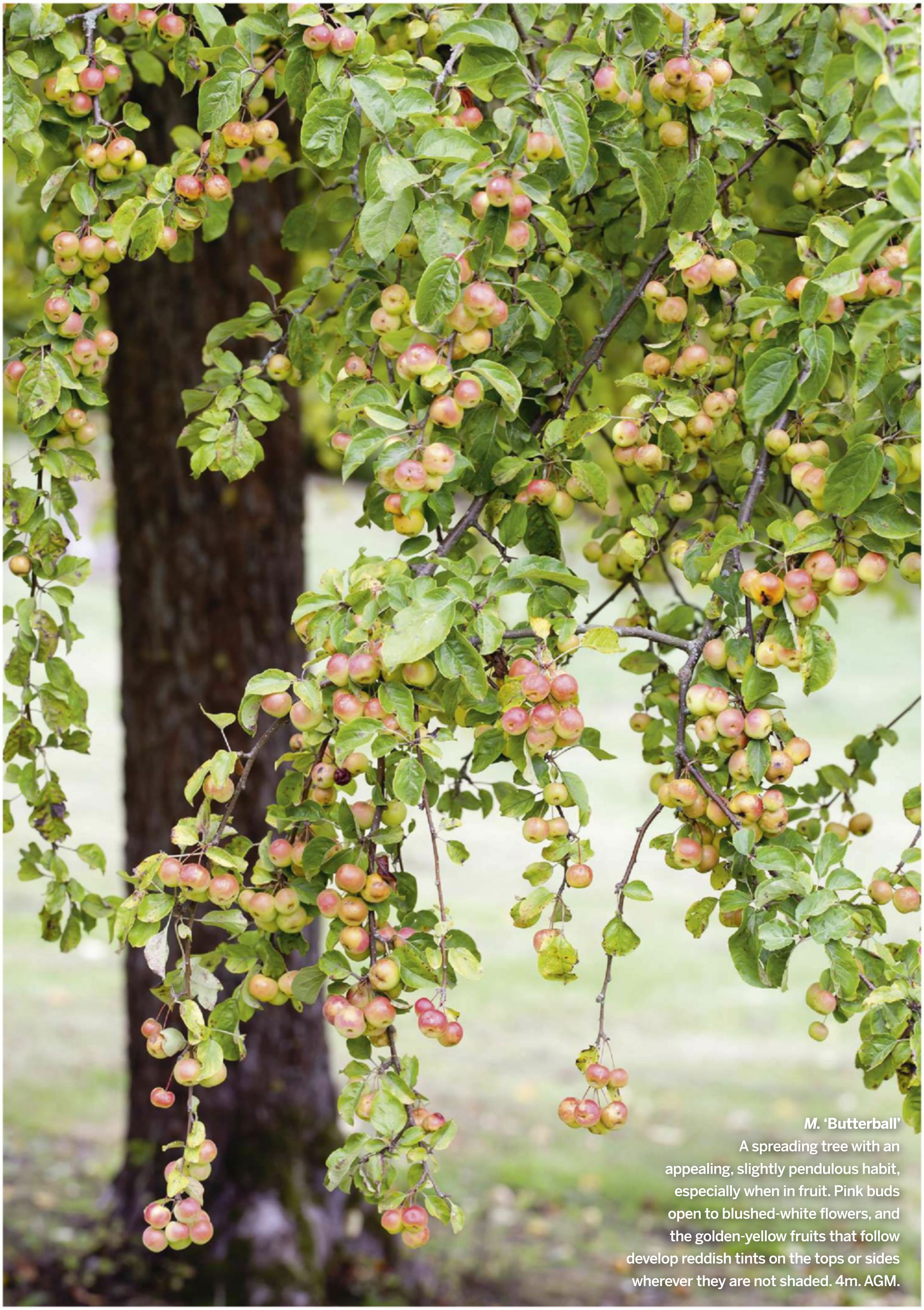
***M.* 'Sun Rival'**
By far the best weeping crab apple – the branches sometimes sweep the ground – with deep-red buds that fade to pink then open to white, pink-tinted blossoms. Bright red fruits in autumn. 4m. AGM.



***M.* 'Gorgeous'**
Lightly blushed white flowers, given a starry look by narrow petals, are followed by deep-red, sometimes orange-tinted fruits that persist for months on the tree and make unusually good jelly. 5m.

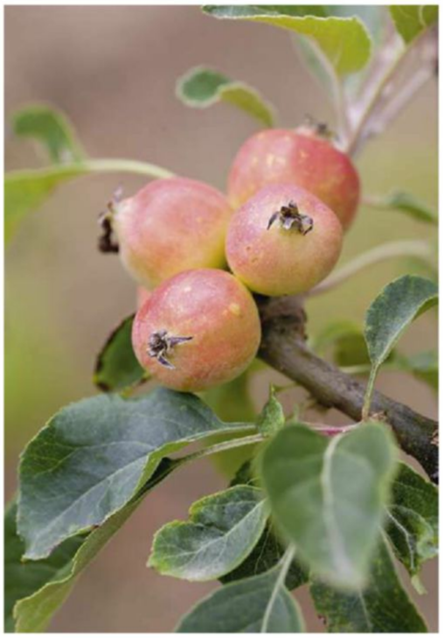


M. **'Evereste'**
Scarlet flower buds fade to pink before opening in a flurry of unusually large, white flowers. These mature to yellowish-orange fruits with a red flush that last well into winter. Originally marketed as a patio crab apple, capitalising on its upright habit, it is now appreciated as a fine all rounder. 7m. AGM.

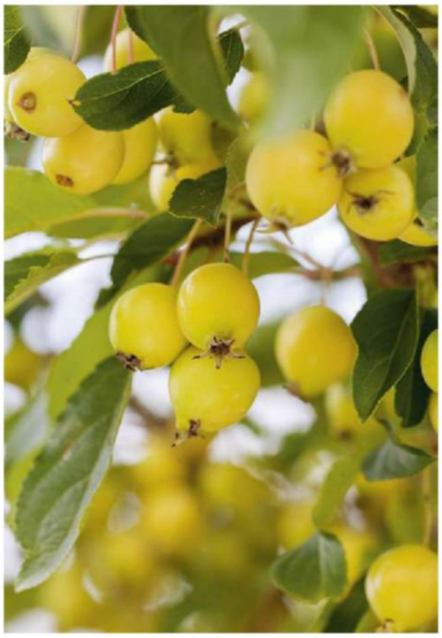


***M.* 'Butterball'**
A spreading tree with an appealing, slightly pendulous habit, especially when in fruit. Pink buds open to blushed-white flowers, and the golden-yellow fruits that follow develop reddish tints on the tops or sides wherever they are not shaded. 4m. AGM.

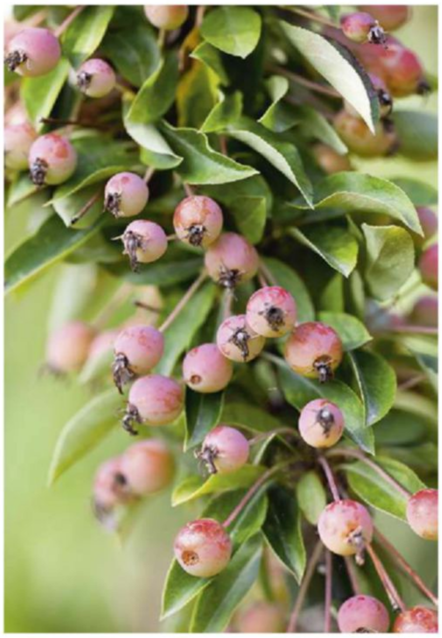
Pink and yellow fruits



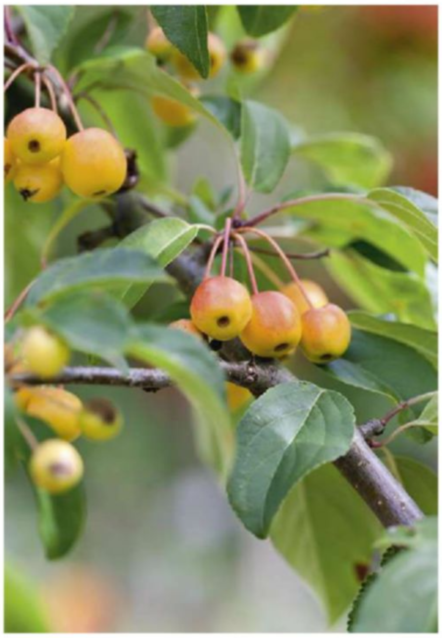
M. Jelly King (='Mattfru')
A recent introduction from New Zealand. Aptly named as it makes an exceptional pink jelly. Large, white, spring flowers open from pink buds, followed by a prolific crop of creamy, orange-yellow fruits. 4m. AGM.



***M.* 'Comtesse de Paris'**
White flowers are followed by slightly pointed, golden-yellow fruits that last well into winter. Trees are more balanced in shape than similar 'Golden Hornet' and more resistant to scab. 4m. AGM.



***M.* 'Adirondack'**
Often sold as 'Admiration', its upright habit is valuable in small spaces. Deep, carmine-pink buds open to clusters of pure-white flowers followed by pinkish-red fruits. An excellent pollinator. 5.5m. AGM.



***M.* x *zumi* 'Professor Sprenger'**
Pink flower buds fade to blush before opening white. The scented flowers are followed by amber fruits that deepen to orange. Also benefits from yellow autumn foliage colour and exceptional disease resistance. 6m.

Crab apple jelly

This recipe is simple, and crab apples contain so much pectin that it usually sets very well. In fact, I add a little crab apple to my marmalade to help it set.

You can use any crab apple, but among the best are: *M.* 'Harry Baker', *M.* Jelly King (='Mattfru'), *M.* 'Dartmouth', *M.* 'John Downie' and *M.* x *robusta* 'Dolgo'.

INGREDIENTS
4kg crab apples, unbruised and undamaged
1kg caster sugar (approx)
1 lemon, juiced

METHOD

- Wash the crab apples (you can leave stalks on), and place in a saucepan. Fill the saucepan with just enough water to cover the apples. Apples float, so push them down with a plate to measure.
- Bring to the boil and simmer for about 30 minutes, until the fruit is soft.
- Pour the apple pulp into a jelly bag, and hang overnight to drip into a pan. Don't be tempted to squeeze the bag as this can make the juice cloudy.
- Next day, measure the juice, and add seven parts sugar to ten parts juice. Add lemon juice and bring to the boil.
- Keep at a rolling boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar, for 40 minutes, skimming off the froth.
- To test the set, chill a saucer in the fridge. When the jelly looks ready, put half a teaspoon on to the saucer and if it sets it's ready to pour into warm, sterilised preserving jars. Seal tightly while the jelly is still slightly warm.

Crab apple care

Crab apples are available as bare root trees in late autumn or early winter for planting in the dormant season. They are also available in containers for planting at any time, although late autumn/early winter and late winter/early spring are the most suitable. Be sure to stake your new tree using a short stout stake to secure the tree low on the trunk.

Crab apples are adaptable trees, happy in most fertile soils that are not parched or waterlogged, in sun, or partial or dappled shade.

Trees are generally healthy, although may suffer from mildew and scab; scab resistant varieties are helpful. Pruning is not usually necessary. However, if trees become untidy they can be rejuvenated by hard pruning immediately after flowering to create a smaller framework. Be sure to remove any suckers from the rootstock.

Where to see

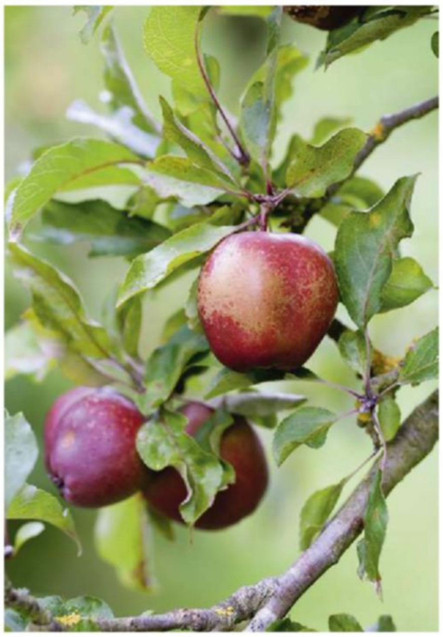
National Collection holders:

- **Brogdale Collections**,
  Brogdale Farm, Brogdale Road,
  Faversham, Kent ME13 8XZ.
  Tel 01795 536250,
  brogdalecollections.co.uk
- **Christabella Charitable Trust**,
  Barnards Farm, Brentwood Road
  West Horndon, Essex CM13 3LX.
  Tel 01277 811262, barnardsfarm.eu
- **Jodrell Bank Discovery Centre,**
  The University of Manchester,
  Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 9DL.
  Tel 01477 571766, jodrellbank.net

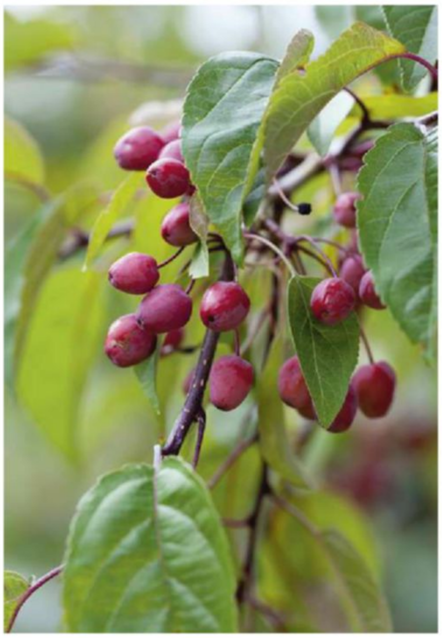
Where to buy

- **Landford Trees**
  Landford Lodge, Landford, Salisbury,
  Wiltshire SP5 2EH.
  Tel 01794 390808,
  landford-trees.co.uk
- **Mail Order Trees**,
  42 Station Road, Fordham, Ely,
  Cambridgeshire CB7 5LW.
  Tel 0800 066 5972,
  mailordertrees.co.uk
- **Majestic Trees**
  Chequers Meadow, Chequers Hill,
  Flamstead, Hertfordshire AL3 8ET.
  Tel 01582 843881, majestictrees.co.uk
- **Orange Pippin Fruit Trees**,
  33 Algarth Rise, Pocklington, York,
  East Yorkshire YO42 2HX.
  Tel 01759 392007,
  www.orangepippintrees.co.uk
- **Ornamental Trees**
  Farnley Hall Estate, Farnley,
  West Yorkshire LS21 2QF.
  Tel 01943 660870,
  ornamental-trees.co.uk

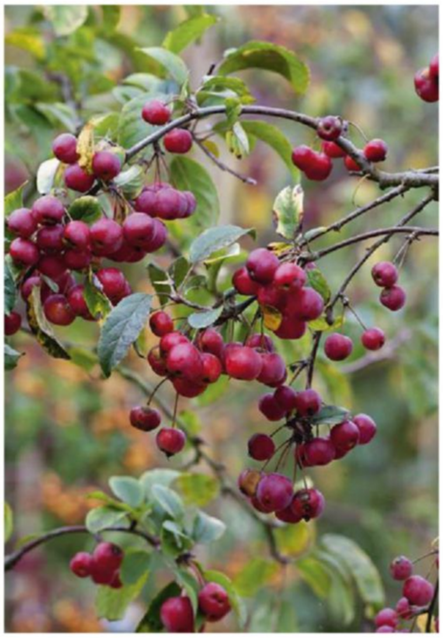
Dark purple-red fruits



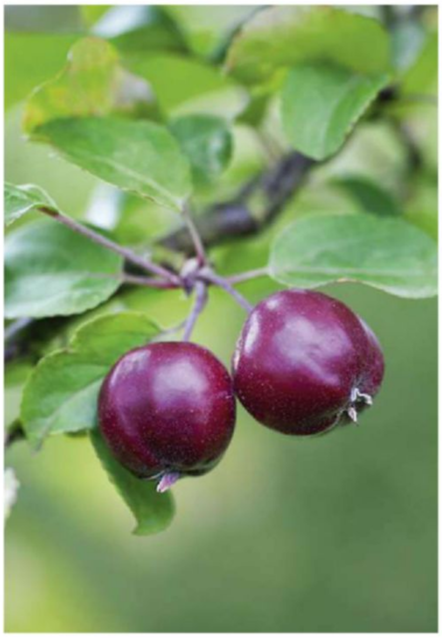
***M.* 'Wisley Crab'**
Rich, purplish-pink flowers, darkening towards the centre of each petal, open against purple-tinted green foliage. Followed by purplish-red fruit, which are red inside and the size of a small eating apple. 3m.



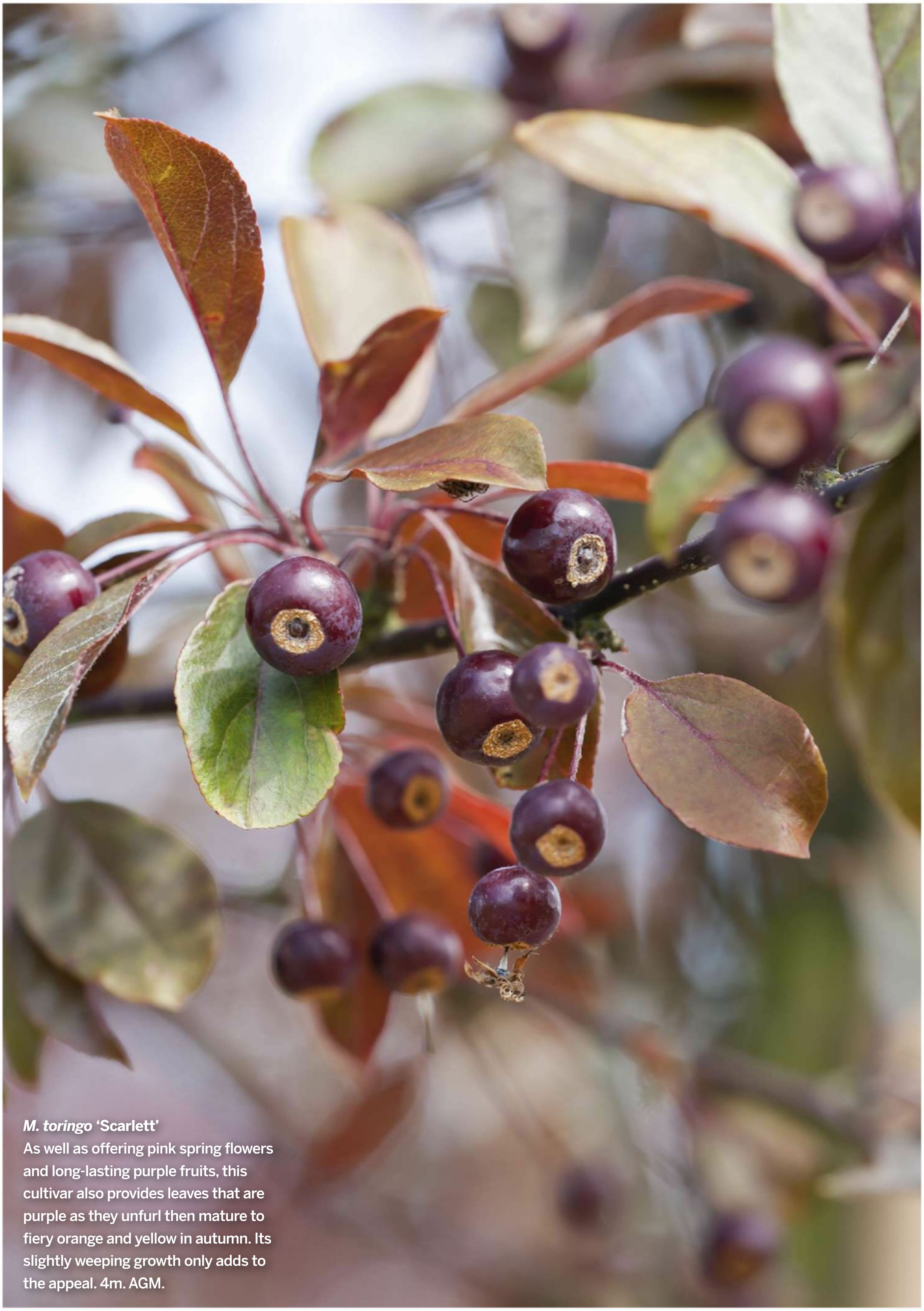
***M.* 'Indian Magic'**
Broadly spreading but upright tree with deep-pink flowers that open from even darker buds. Later, small, rather elongated orange fruits become red and last well into winter. Disease resistance is good. 5m.



***M.* x *robusta* 'Red Sentinel'**
Fragrant, white spring flowers open from pale pink buds. Large, glossy, deep-red fruits follow and last almost until spring. Also has yellow autumn leaf colour and impressive disease resistance. 8m. AGM.



***M.* 'Harry Baker'**
Huge purplish-pink flowers open against purple foliage that fades to green, followed by ruby-red fruits. Named for a fruit foreman at RHS Garden Wisley. Good disease resistance and makes a superb jelly. 5m.



M. toringo **'Scarlett'**
As well as offering pink spring flowers and long-lasting purple fruits, this cultivar also provides leaves that are purple as they unfurl then mature to fiery orange and yellow in autumn. Its slightly weeping growth only adds to the appeal. 4m. AGM.

MANY THANKS TO LANDFORD TREES IN WILTSHIRE WHERE THE IMAGES FOR THIS FEATURE WERE TAKEN.

Xa Tollemache

The determined designer who's not afraid of getting her hands dirty discusses swapping dressage for digging and ensuring her talent is never obscured by her title

WORDS TIM RICHARDSON PORTRAIT CHARLIE HOPKINSON

"Do you drive a digger?" asks Lady Xa Tollemache as we pace the arboretum she's recently planted in the grounds of Helmingham Hall, the moated Tudor mansion where she lives with her husband, the 5th Baron Tollemache (or Tim). It's a typical rejoinder from a garden designer with no formal training who prides herself on her practical know-how and work ethic. A low yin-yang mound ("I'm interested in comparative religion") and other small landforms are evidence of Xa's excavating expertise, a skill she was inspired to acquire after seeing diggers in action at the Chelsea Flower Show, where she has created three successful gardens. But…

"I'm fully aware that I'm not taken seriously by the garden design profession," she says. "I run the risk of being 'Lady Tollemache who designs gardens'. But I've done about 80 gardens – 60 for people I don't know. And I don't bring clients here." She says that at her first Chelsea Flower Show, in 1997, someone was overheard asking who she was, and the reply was, "Oh, she's just an amateur."

I try to reassure her that this is not a reputation I am particularly aware of, beyond the usual jealousies in any profession. All garden designers use their friends and contacts to get work, especially in the first stage of a career – it's just that Xa's friends often live in castles and mansions rather than semis and terraces. But she is unwilling to let go of the idea. Perhaps everyone needs something to fight against – even the châtelaine of a grand country house.

In her office, the drawing board takes centre stage, but this is no normal work-station: Xa has a "sea view" in the form of the flowing moat outside the window, there are sticky notes on 18th-century furniture, fine paintings on the walls and rolled-up plans overflowing from wicker log baskets. Nevertheless, in many ways this is less grand than many a professional design set-up: she employs just one assistant, which means she can keep close to the design work (five to ten projects each year).

The youngest of five children brought up in Staffordshire, Xa (short for Alexandra) was just ten when her father died. Despite obvious academic potential, she left school at 16 and spent time in Vienna – "I learned German and how to waltz" – and in Paris, at the Sorbonne, studying art history. Back in London, she briefly worked in an interior decorating shop before meeting Tim and marrying at the age of 20. Xa came to Helmingham in 1975 when her husband inherited the title.

"I remember looking at the garden and thinking, 'My god, what do I do?' I didn't know the difference between a rose and a dahlia," she recalls. "I came out and asked Roy [the head gardener] to teach me how to dig. He politely said that I could tie up the sweet peas. But I said: 'No. I want to learn to dig.'"

And dig she has. Slight of build but possessed of great energy, Xa is clearly very much a hands-on member of the garden team at Helmingham. The walled garden is an immaculate showcase that mingles decorative horticulture (a great double border down the centre) with the productive side.

Head gardener Roy came to work at Helmingham in 1965, when he was 14, and it is clear that he and Xa have a rare and fruitful working relationship. "I never disagree with Roy," she says. "He knows all about vegetables and every plant you can think of, and I deal with the design side."

It was in 1996 that she decided to take the plunge and become a professional garden designer. Xa's passion had been dressage but she decided to give this up – "I was neither young enough, rich enough nor good enough" – and someone suggested gardening to her, which had become her secondary interest.

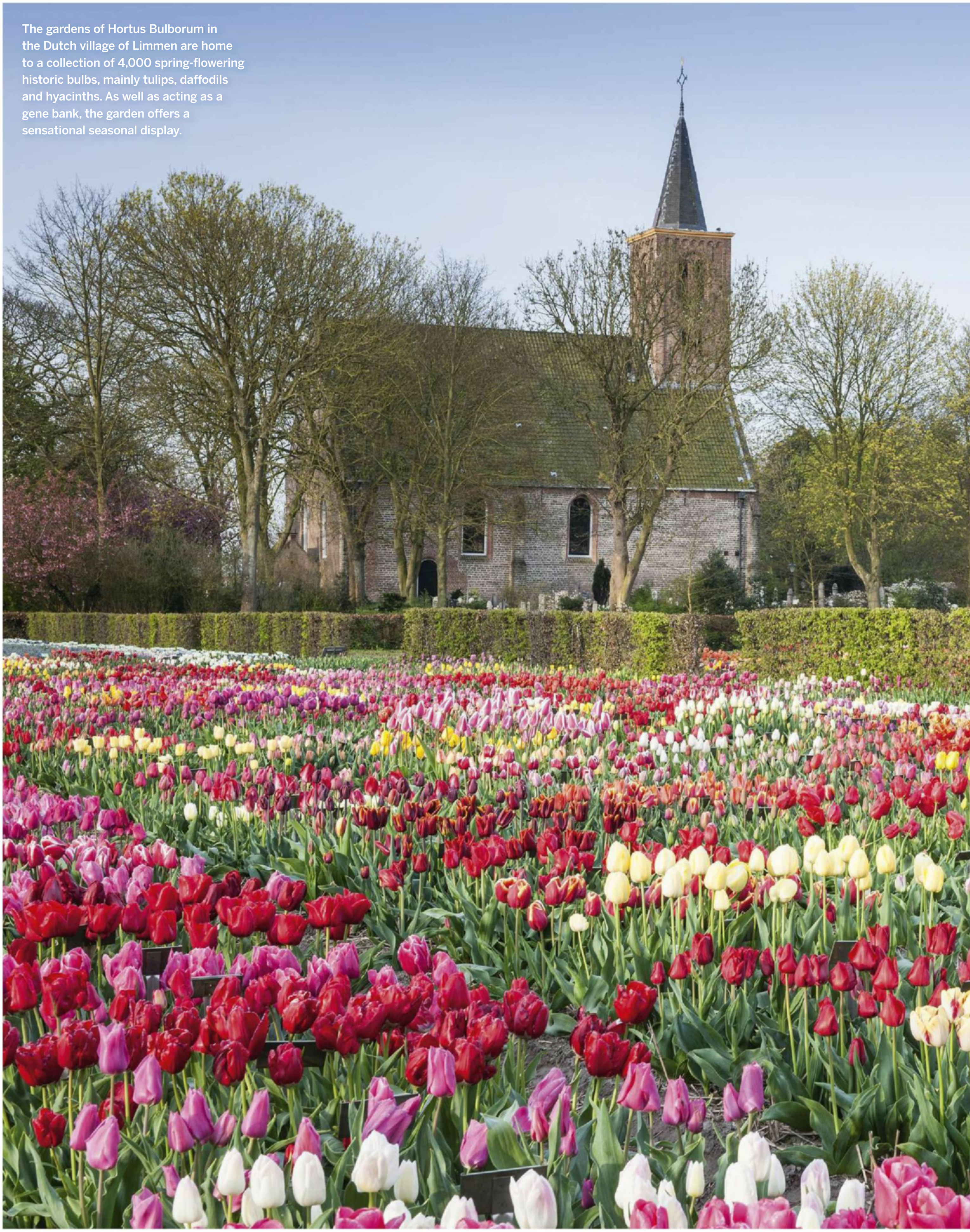
Xa did not go to design school but was "apprenticed" to a designer for nine months instead, striking out on her own after that. She says she has learned most from Helmingham itself: "Gertrude Jekyll said that a garden is a grand teacher. I have learned about scale and proportion, the light and the landscape." The main lesson from designing is, she says, "if you take away the faults, the things you really object to, it suddenly all becomes very clear".

Xa has been addressed as "m'lady" by the staff throughout my visit, and Helmingham is undoubtedly a beautiful place in which to live – another world, in fact. But I leave in no doubt that anyone who writes off Xa Tollemache as a lady of the manor who designs gardens on the side is making a serious mistake. □

USEFUL INFORMATION
Xa Tollemache, Landscape & Garden Designer, Helmingham Hall, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 6EF.
Tel 01473 890799, xa-tollemache.co.uk

NEXT MONTH Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richard Deverell.

> *"Gertrude Jekyll said that a garden is a grand teacher. From Helmingham I have learned about scale and proportion, the light and the landscape"*



The gardens of Hortus Bulborum in the Dutch village of Limmen are home to a collection of 4,000 spring-flowering historic bulbs, mainly tulips, daffodils and hyacinths. As well as acting as a gene bank, the garden offers a sensational seasonal display.

Living history

Just 20 miles north of Amsterdam, Hortus Bulborum is a living garden museum that has been conserving Holland's most famous export for almost 90 years

WORDS ROSANNA MORRIS PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM

Half an hour's drive from Schiphol airport, next to a church and beneath the flight path of passenger jets, is an extremely important patch of land. Most of the year it is nothing but mud and sand, but come April this four-acre garden is awash with a kaleidoscopic display of tulips. While fields of tulips are commonplace during spring in this part of the Netherlands, these examples are not grown for the country's flower bulb market. Rather, they are museum exhibits – the living cultural heritage of the bulb industry.

Hortus Bulborum (Latin for bulb garden) in the Dutch village of Limmen has 2,700 different types of wild and cultivated tulip grown purely to safeguard for the future. Some are near-extinct heirloom tulips, many are no longer in commercial production, and quite a few you won't see anywhere else but here. Take the Rembrandt tulips, for example. These highly coveted, rare tulips take their name from the famous Dutch painter, possibly because they feature so often in Dutch Old Masters, although ironically not in any by Rembrandt himself, or perhaps because they look almost painted themselves with delicate feathered patterns that are in fact caused by a breaking virus. Also known as broken or rectified tulips, they were hugely popular in the 17th century but today are rarely grown because the virus that causes the breaks in their colour is now closely controlled. Their scarcity and beauty, make them the star attraction at Hortus, which also has historic hyacinths and daffodils.

In 1924, the headmaster of the school in Limmen, Pieter Boschman, became so concerned that certain bulbs were disappearing he began planting historical cultivars in his garden. Four years later he had run out of space for his collection so, along with his friend Dr Willem Eduard de Mol, who had amassed rare hyacinths, he acquired a field at the headquarters of bulb company Van't Hof & Blokker in the neighbouring village, Akersloot. There the collection remained for 50 years – surviving the Second World War and the famine of 1944 that drove many to eat flower bulbs.

When Van't Hof & Blokker moved down the road to Heiloo in 1978, ▷

Support Hortus Bulborum

Hortus Bulborum is a volunteer-led operation and relies on the income from entrance fees and bulb sales to cover costs and continue its work. The foundation is also supported by sponsorship and donations. Anyone can register to donate or sponsor and you can even adopt a bulb for €70 a year, which gives you free access to the garden for two people and the option to have a sign next to your chosen tulip. Visit hortus-bulborum.nl to see what bulbs are available to buy and to register as a donor or sponsor.

Grown in neat squares, each made up of a single species or cultivar, the tulips form a patchwork of rich mahoganies, purples, delicate pinks, reds, coppers and yellows

▷ the bulbs moved too. In 1990 the collection moved again, this time to the plot it occupies today. For the past 25 years, volunteers (mostly retired bulb growers) have continued Pieter's work.

During the last week in April and the first week in May most of the tulips are in flower, attracting more than 5,000 visitors who wander mesmerised up and down the sandy aisles. Grown in neat squares, each made up of a single species or cultivar, and in rows according to their group, the tulips form a patchwork of rich mahoganies, purples, delicate pinks, reds, coppers and yellows.

In addition to the official 15 divisions of tulip, Hortus also uses four older classes: Duc van Tols (among the oldest cultivated tulips raised in the Netherlands), Darwins (late-flowering tulips, named after the explorer, with uni-coloured, angular flowers, and not to be confused with newer Darwin hybrids), Mendels (multipurpose cultivars bred from Duc van Tols crossed with Darwins) and Breeders (uni-coloured tulips used to breed broken tulips). Breeders have all but disappeared and the first generation of the widely recognised Triumph tulips (the largest group in cultivation bred from Single Early tulips crossed with Darwins in the 1920s) are practically extinct but Hortus Bulborum has the rare Triumphs 'Denbola', 'Korneforos' and 'Telescopium' among others.

The operation is run on a shoestring so extra bulbs of certain species and cultivars are grown and sold to raise revenue. "The little parcels are our museum. The large parcels are our shop," says volunteer Max Nuyens, a retired fertiliser salesman who has been involved with the garden since 2007, pointing to several large patches of tulips. "Most people come to see the Rembrandts as they are so beautiful and rare," he adds. "We have a special licence to grow the originals as many people don't want the virus on their land. It is forbidden to grow these tulips in other parts of the Netherlands – there are even field inspections – so our collection is unique."

It's no surprise that in the 17th century the Rembrandts sparked what has become known as 'tulip mania' (1635-1637) – a craze that saw tulip bulbs sell for eye-watering sums of money; as much ▷

Rembrandt tulips

Although there is a division of tulip called Rembrandt, the term has come to be applied to tulips from many different classes, all linked by elaborately streaked swirls of colour on their petals. Named after the painter Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn (1606-1669), who lived and worked in Amsterdam at the time of the so-called 'tulip mania', the original Rembrandts have a feather-like patterning caused by the degenerative tulip-breaking virus (TBV). Not discovered until the 1920s, the virus progressively weakens the plant until propagation becomes impossible, making these tulips unpopular with commercial breeders. In some parts of the Netherlands, you are forbidden from growing the original Rembrandts, which is why they are so rare. But Hortus Bulborum has been granted special permission and has true Rembrandt tulips, including *Tulipa* 'Absalon' (1780) and *T.* 'Bridesmaid' (1900). There are also healthy, virus-free Rembrandts, that have a similar decorative streaking, such as *T.* 'Helmar' (see right) and *T.* 'Cordell Hull' (also at Hortus), these have been selected from plants where the colour variation has a genetic cause, so there is no risk of the disease, which is carried by aphids, spreading to other tulips.

32 of Hortus Bulborum's tulips

1 *Tulipa* 'Silver Standard'
Single early (A broken, rectified Rembrandt). Registered 1760. 30-45cm.

2 *T.* 'Golden Standard'
Single early (A broken, rectified Rembrandt). Registered 1760. 20-30cm.

3 *T.* 'Tournesol' (Red and Yellow)
Double early. Registered 1769. 25-30cm.

4 *T.* 'Rose De La Montagne'
Double early. Registered 1893. 30-45cm. USDA 3a-8b[†].

5 *T.* 'El Toreador'
Double early. Registered 1890. 25-30cm.

6 *T.* 'David Teniers'
Double early. Registered 1960. 25cm.

7 *T.* 'Lac van Rijn'
Single early. Registered 1620. One of the oldest tulip cultivars in cultivation. 25cm.

8 *T.* 'Ballade'
Lily-flowered. Registered 1953. 30-45cm. AGM*. RHS H6.

9 *T.* 'Burgundy'
Lily-flowered. Registered 1957. 45-60cm.

10 *T.* 'Diana'
Single early. Registered 1909. 30-45cm.

11 *T.* 'Cardinal's Hat'
Single early. Registered 1860. 30-45cm.

12 *T. sylvestris*
Species. 15-30cm. USDA 5a-9b.

13 *T.* 'Peppermintstick'
Species (*T. clusiana*). 15-30cm. AGM. Registered 1998. RHS H6, USDA 3a-7b.

14 *T.* 'Preludium'
Triumph. Registered 1945. 45-60cm. USDA 4a-8b.

15 *T.* 'Helmar'
Triumph. Registered 1986. A modern, virus-free cultivar that imitates the feathering of broken Rembrands. 45-60cm. USDA 3a-7b.

16 *T.* 'Striped Sail'
Mendel. Registered 1960. 45cm.

Turn over for more historic tulips ▷

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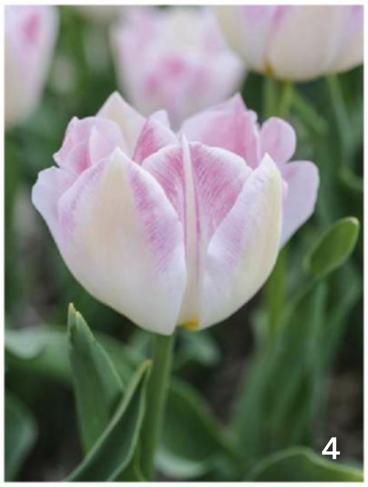
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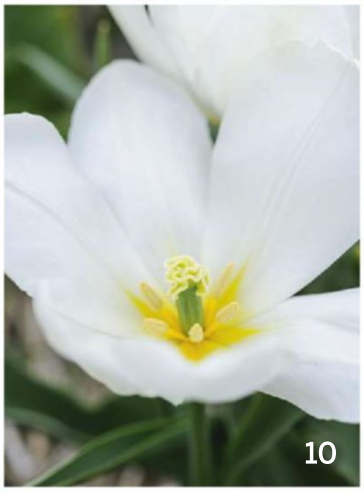
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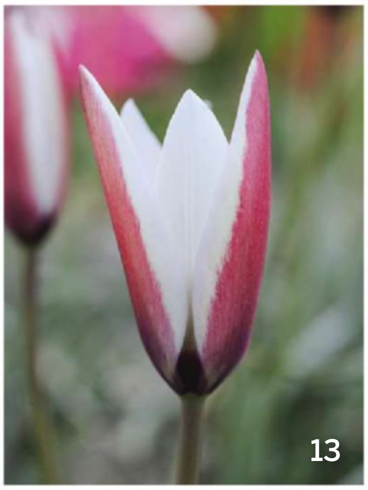
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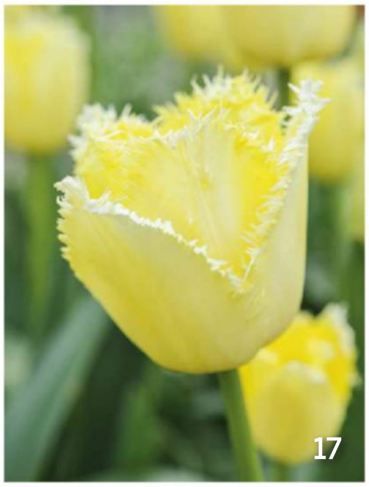
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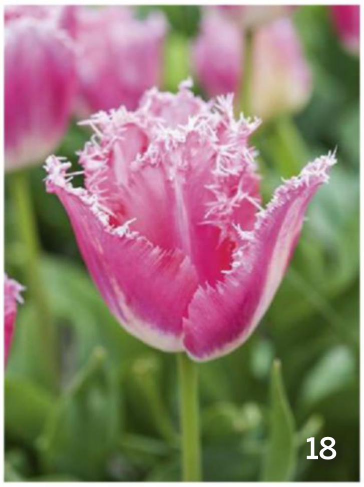
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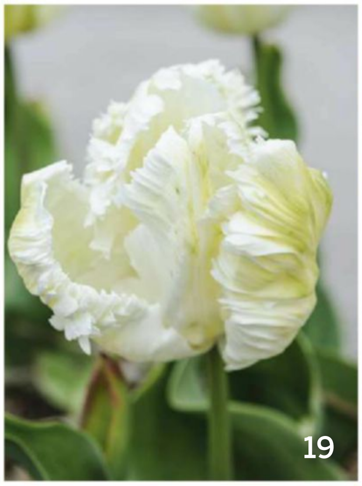
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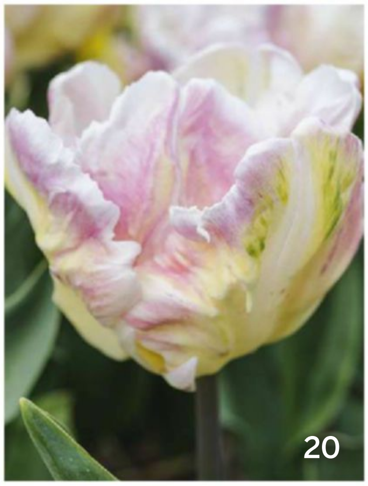
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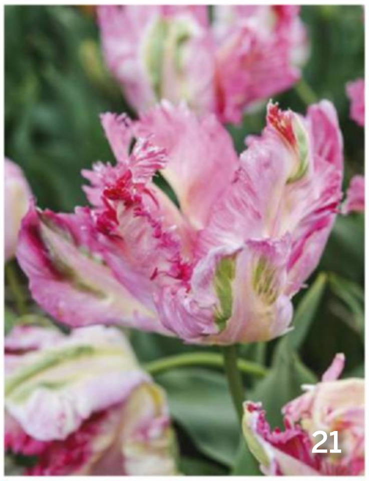
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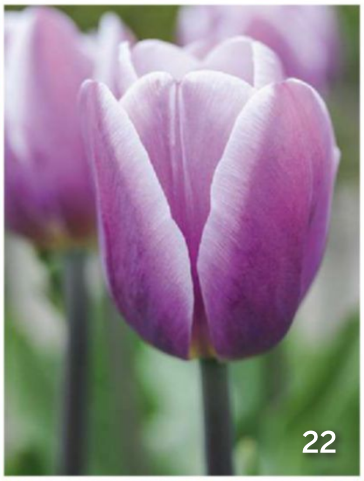
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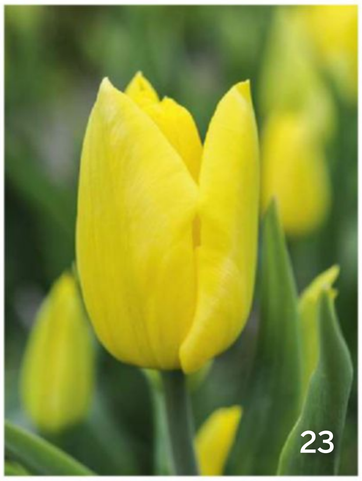
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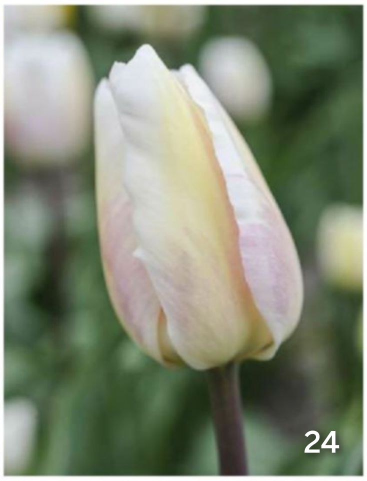
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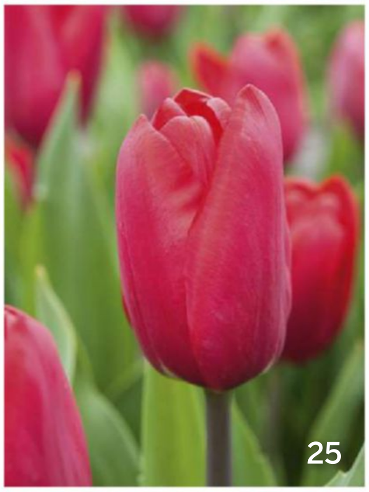
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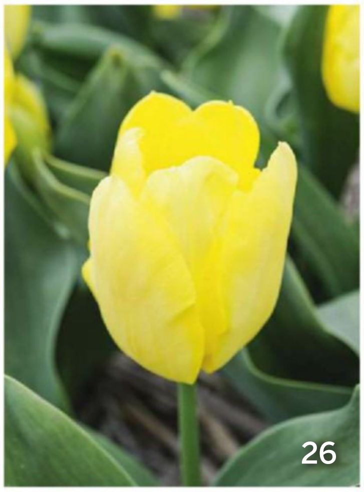
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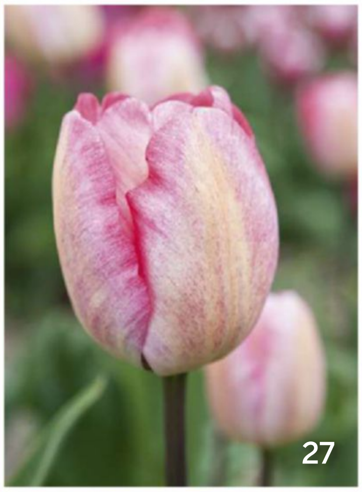
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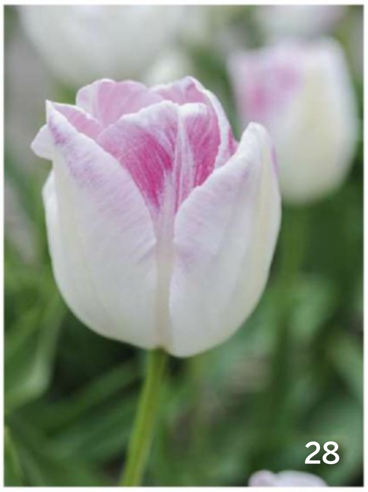
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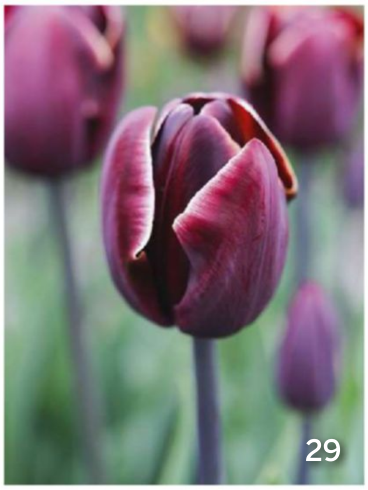
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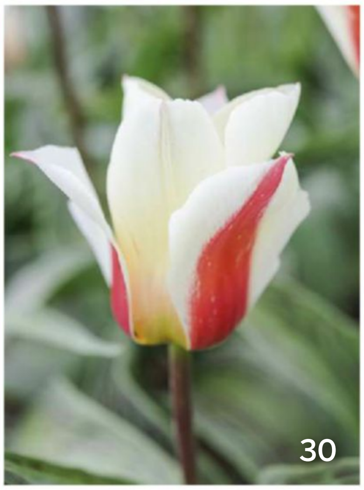
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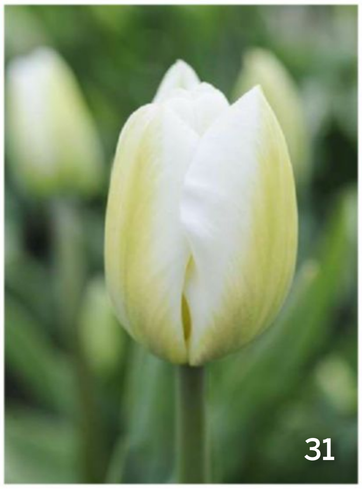
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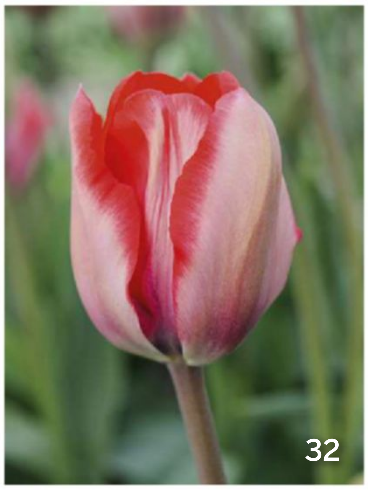
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17 *T.* ‘Laverock’
Fringed. Registered 1970. 45-60cm.

18 *T.* ‘Fancy Frills’
Fringed. Registered 1972. 45-60cm.
AGM. RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

19 *T.* ‘White Parrot’
Parrot. Registered 1943.
30-45cm. USDA 4a-7b.

20 *T.* ‘Libretto Parrot’
Parrot. Registered 1993. 30-45cm.

21 *T.* ‘Apricot Parrot’
Parrot. Registered 1961. 50cm.
AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-7b.

22 *T.* ‘Pandion’
Single late. Registered 1951. 45-55cm.
USDA 3a-8b.

23 *T.* ‘Golden Hind’
Single late. Registered 1954. 60cm.

24 *T.* ‘Gander’s Overture’
Darwin. Registered 1986. 60cm.

25 *T.* ‘Samson’
Triumph. Registered 1982. 45-55cm.

26 *T.* ‘Sint Pancras’
Triumph. Registered 1955. 50cm.

27 *T.* ‘Gander’s Rhapsody’
Triumph. Registered 1970. 45-50cm.

28 *T.* ‘Painted Lady’
Single late. Registered 1901. 45-60cm.

29 *T.* ‘African Queen’
Triumph. Registered 1983. 53cm.
USDA 3a-8b.

30 *T.* ‘Can Can’
Species (*T. greigii*). Registered 1955.
30-45cm.

31 *T.* ‘Albino’
Triumph. Registered 1911. 45cm.
USDA 3a-8b.

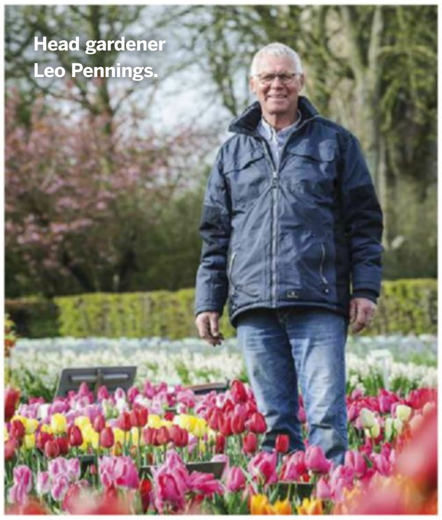
32 *T.* ‘Advance’
Triumph. Registered 1920. 60cm.

▷ as 5,000 guilders at a time when a skilled craftsman earned around 300 guilders a year. The candy-like, cream and pink-red Rembrandt *Tulipa* ‘Zomerschoon’ (1620) was one example. Also popular at the time was the single early *T.* ‘Lac van Rijn’ with its pointed purple-edged white petals. Both can be seen at Hortus Bulborum.

Although the frenzy came to an unceremonious end with a market crash that followed a bulb auction in Haarlem to which only a few buyers showed up (possibly because of an outbreak of bubonic plague), causing panic to spread, tulips are still one of the largest industries in the Netherlands (worth €250 million) with around five billion bulbs produced every year.

Around 80 per cent of all flower bulbs traded worldwide come from the Netherlands, and most are tulips. Although they originate from Eastern Europe and Central Asia, tulips grow well in the Dutch climate, especially in the sandy soil in the north of the country, something the Flemish botanist Carolus Clusius, who introduced tulips to the Netherlands, discovered at the end of the 16th century. At Hortus Bulborum, it is still possible to see one of Clusius’s original hybrids: the *T.* ‘Duc van Tol Red and Yellow’, created in 1595 – a favourite of Hortus’s head gardener Leo Pennings.

Once a week during the flowering season, Leo and three volunteers prevent any further spread of the virus by destroying any tulips showing signs of infection, using a drip of weed killer. Weeks later, it is time to lift all the bulbs out of the ground. “It’s the secret to growing tulips,” says Max. “We dry them, pack them into crates, label them and store them at 28°C for several months before replanting them at the end of October.”


Head gardener Leo Pennings.

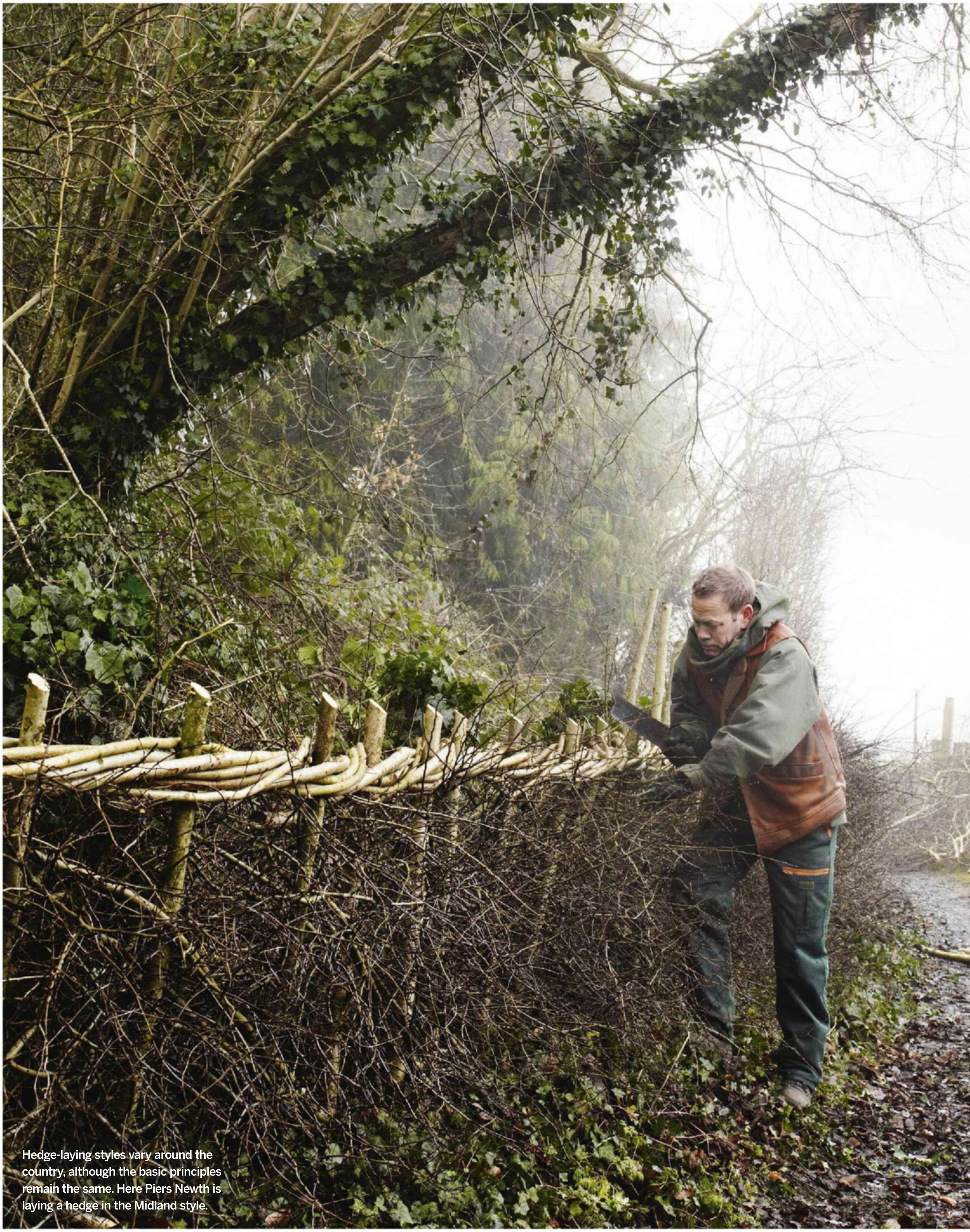
It takes Leo and his team of 12 volunteers – most of whom are in their sixties and seventies – a full two days to lift the thousands of bulbs by hand using a double-handled trowel. “The men compete to see who can lift the most,” says Max. “We do worry that no one is learning the technique today as most bulb work is done with machinery. We’re not sure anyone will be able to do it in ten years but we hope young growers pick it up and continue our work.” □

USEFUL INFORMATION
Hortus Bulborum, Zuidkerkenlaan 23A,
1906 AC Limmen, the Netherlands.
Tel +31 (0)6 118 89489.
Website hortus-bulborum.nl.
Open 6 April – 16 May, Monday to Saturday, 10am-5pm, Sunday 12pm-5pm.

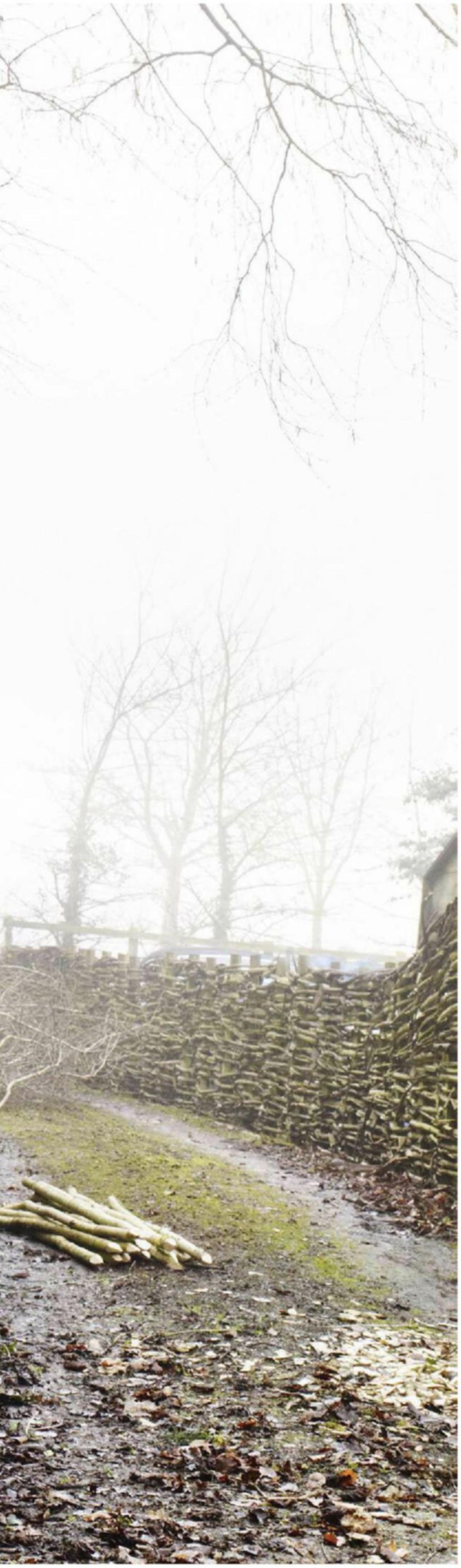
Breeding for the future

To raise money for Hortus Bulborum, head gardener Leo Pennings and his team propagate the bulbs for sale, keeping the offsets and selling the mother bulb. After being lifted out of the ground following the spring flowering season, the new bulbs are replanted and the parent stock is sorted for selling, either to particular clients or wholesale to bulb companies that specialise in rare bulbs, such as Jacques Amand (jacquesamandintl.com) and Peter C Nijssen (nijssentuin.nl). As the nature of the work at Hortus Bulborum is to produce bulbs for posterity and not commercially, there is only ever a limited number for sale. Towards the end of October, new baby bulbs are planted in the ground along with the other bulbs at a depth of 10cm and covered with a thin layer of straw. The bulbs grow during winter and spring, and the story continues.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.



Hedge-laying styles vary around the country, although the basic principles remain the same. Here Piers Newth is laying a hedge in the Midland style.



The lay of the land

The art of hedge laying is a centuries-old skill for creating living, stock-proof fences – and although it requires hard work and patience, practice invariably makes perfect

WORDS **LOUISE ALLEN** PHOTOGRAPHY **ANDREW MONTGOMERY**
ILLUSTRATIONS **LIAM McAULEY**

Hedge laying is a country skill that has been practised for centuries. Although a well-laid hedge looks beautiful, the original aim was to create a fence to stop sheep, cattle and other stock from straying. Styles vary across the country (see page 76), but the principles of hedge-laying remain the same. By making an angled cut to a hedge plant's stem – so that you reduce the thickness on one side – you can bend the stems over so they are still attached and almost horizontal but at enough of an upward angle to allow sap to continue to rise from the root system.

By laying the hedge you not only create a living fence, you also help to encourage new growth, making it an excellent way of regenerating an old, overgrown hedge without replacing it. It overcomes the problem of an unsightly hedge that has become difficult to maintain, or has simply grown into a line of trees. Even if you're not lucky enough to have inherited a mature hedge, you can still lay a younger hedge if you plant it with hedge laying in mind. The hawthorn hedge you can see pictured left and overleaf was planted just five years ago.

Hawthorn is probably the most commonly used species for hedge laying, although blackthorn is another good option – especially as you will get the added bonus of sloes. Both are hardy with dense thorns. Other typical hedgerow species include hazel, dogwood, guelder rose, dog rose and field maple. A laid hedge acts as a haven for wildlife – everything from insects to dormice and nesting birds – and a blend of these species makes for a mixed hedge that will be both aesthetically pleasing and provide a more diverse habitat.

Hedge laying is a seasonal job carried out between October and March when trees and shrubs are dormant, and birds have finished nesting in the hedges. It is also the time of the year when many of the materials you'll need for hedge-laying, such as the hazel and ash for the stakes and bindings that add strength and stability to the hedge, can be easily sourced.

The National Hedge Laying Society, set up in the 1970s to maintain the traditional skills of hedgerow management, lists woodland workers with hazel material for sale during the hedge-laying season, and has details of hedge layers around the country. It also runs courses in hedge laying, if you want to lay your own. While initially quite tricky to grasp, it's a skill that really is a case of practice makes perfect. Once laid, a hedge simply needs regular trimming to keep it in good order for decades – far longer than a wooden fence and infinitely more beautiful. ☐

• Turn over to find out how to lay a hedge ▷

How to lay a hedge

1 First you need to remove the lower side branches from each stem, ideally using a pair of loppers (see right). This will allow light to reach the base of the hedge and encourage new growth, ensuring that the hedge thickens.

2 When cutting into the stem (or 'pleacher'), you need to slice down at an angle just above ground level. Make the cut quite deep, far enough to allow the stem to bend over sufficiently for you to lay it down, but take care not to slice it all the way through.

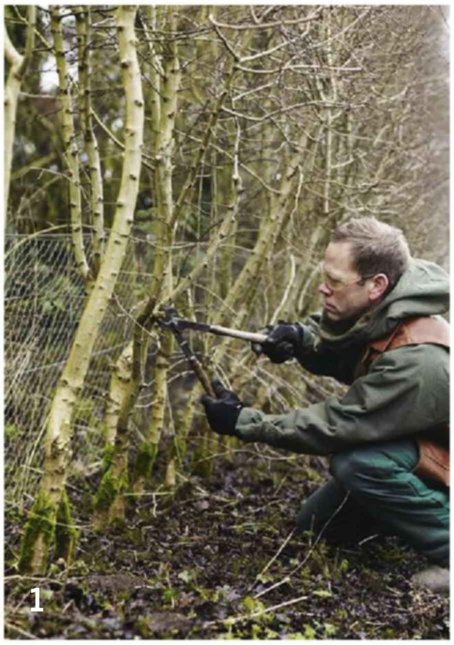
3 Once you've made a cut in each stem, you can lay these down along the length of the hedge. You should never lay the stems completely horizontal as some upward slant is required to allow the sap to rise through the plant.

4 To add strength and stability to your hedge you will need to drive in a series of upright stakes, at intervals of around 50cm, along the whole of its length. These stakes need to be sturdy enough for you to hammer in, around 40-50mm thick, and cut to a length of around 1.6m. Hazel and ash are good woods to use, and you should be able to source stakes from a local woodland worker.

5 Bind the stakes firmly together, using long, thin and flexible hazel rods, known as binders, heathers or weavers. Ideally, these should be no thicker than around 25mm – the thinner they are the more flexible they will be for weaving – and around 2.5-3m long. Again, you can source these from a local woodland worker. Starting at one end, weave your binders around the tops of the stakes to hold the stakes firmly in place and add further strength. They also create a very attractive top to your hedge.

6 When your hedge is firmly bound, cut the cleft stumps (the stumps from the part of the stem not cut) down to just above ground level and be sure to leave them as clean and tidy as possible, as this is where regrowth is most desired.

- **A word of caution** Always take care when hedge laying as the thorns can be vicious. Wear thick, protective gloves, sturdy boots and clothing, and eye protection.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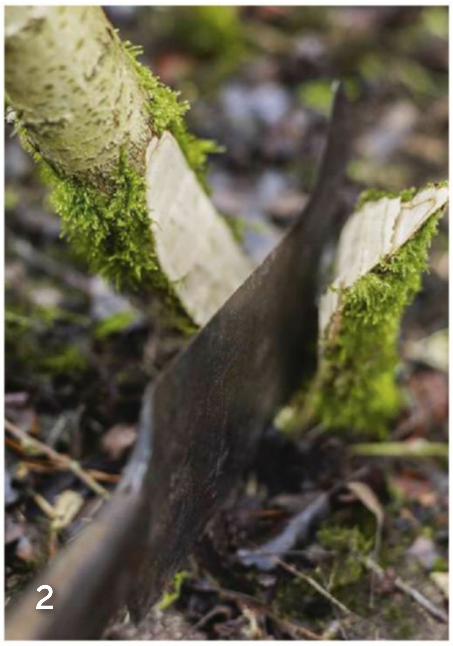
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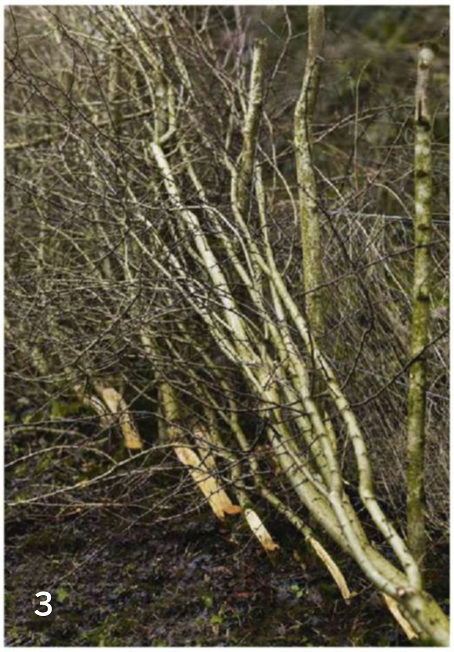
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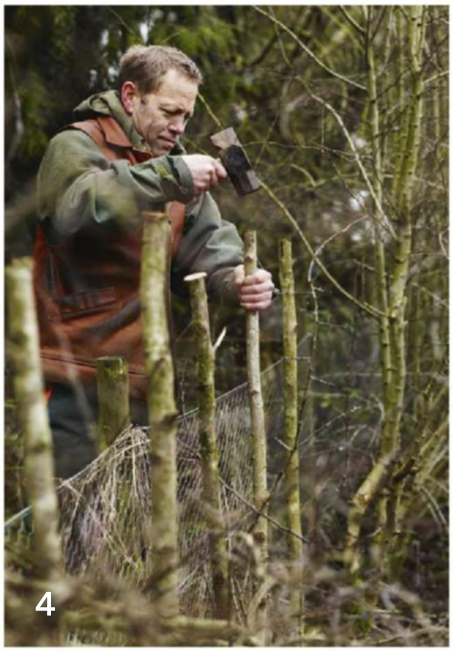
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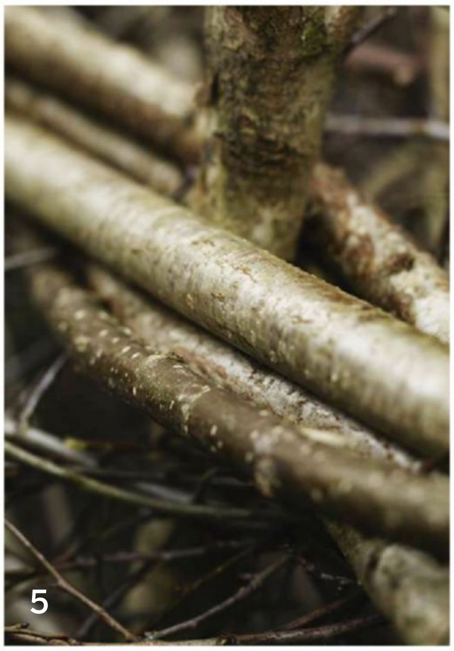
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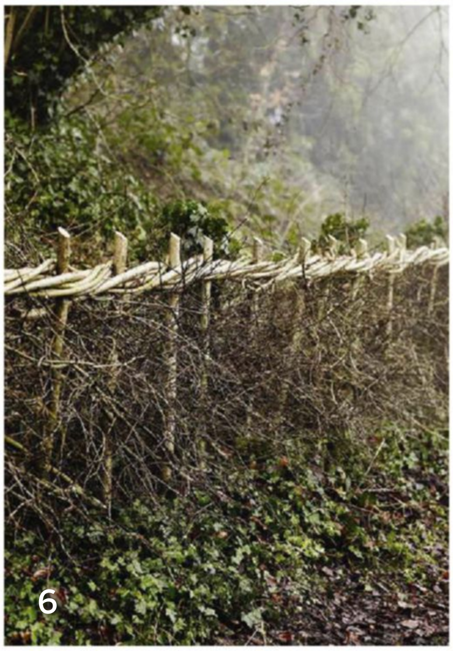
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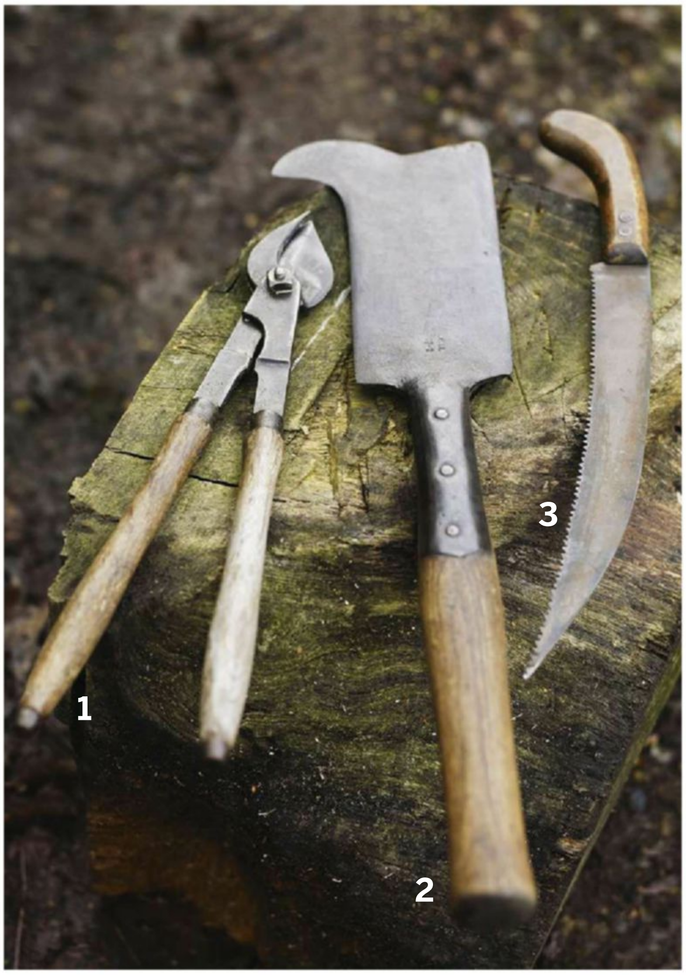
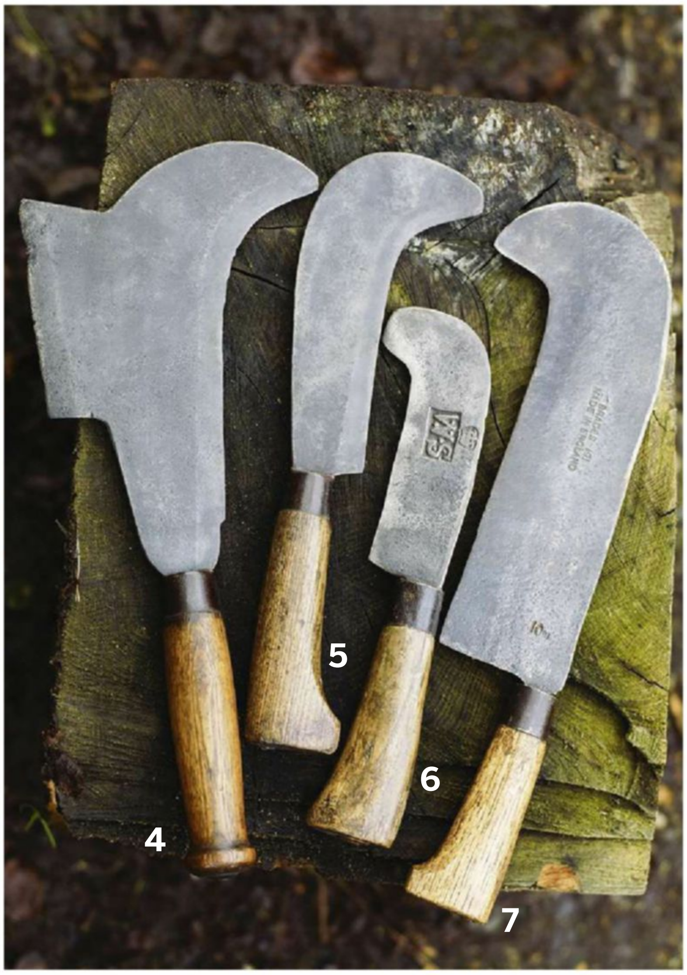




Tools for the trade

Traditionally, most hedge layers use a billhook for cutting through stems and branches. There are numerous different styles of billhook, which vary dramatically in weight and length. As with any tool, the feel of it in your hand is important, so it is worth finding a good tool supplier with a range you can try out for yourself. Vintage tools, such as those pictured above, can often be a good option.

1 French loppers are the perfect tool for removing side branches.
2 Yorkshire billhook is the preferred billhook for many professional hedge layers. It is generally larger and heavier than many other designs, making it ideal for cutting through bigger stems. It has a square-shaped, doubled-edged head and a short nose (the hook on the end).
3 Pruning saws are ideal for cutting down cleft stumps.
4 Nottinghamshire pattern billhook has some similarities to the Yorkshire pattern, with its distinctive double blade, but is smaller.
5 Berkshire, or Moss pattern, billhook is smaller than the Yorkshire pattern, and offers a well-balanced blade and handle that is easy to use.
6 Spar hook is a light and slim tool more commonly used by thatchers, but is also used by some hedge layers.
7 Kent pattern billhook has a deeper blade than the Berkshire pattern, with a short nose that is useful for working at the bottom of a hedge.

Further information

Find out more about the craft from the **National Hedge Laying Society** (hedgelaying.org.uk), which provides information on courses along with details of professional hedge-layers.
You can get a taste of the skill involved in hedge-laying at the annual **National Hedge Laying Championship,** where over 100 competitors enter eight regional styles to become supreme champion. This year's event takes place at Chew Valley Lakes, near Bristol. 24 October. See hedgelaying.org.uk for details.

SUPPLIERS

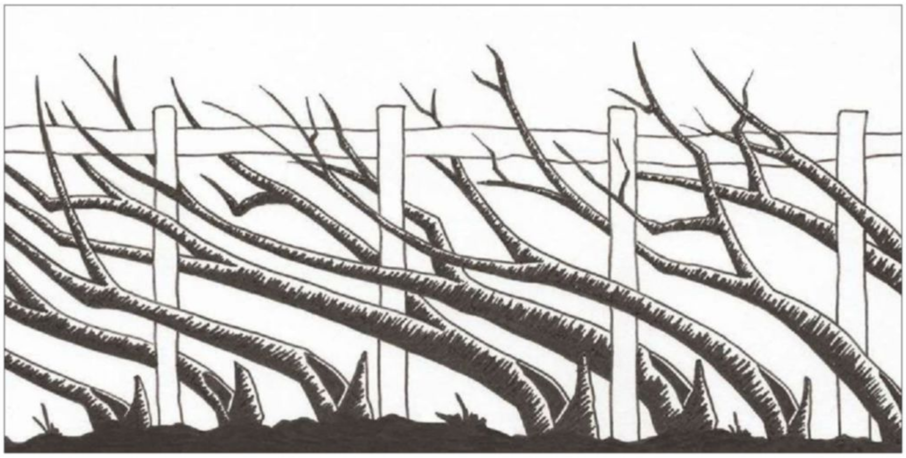
- **A Morris & Sons Ltd**
  Tel 01647 252352,
  Small company that has been making billhooks and other tools since the 1800s.
- **Carters**
  Tel 01484 666806, richardcarterltd.co.uk
  Another small manufacturer making hand tools since 1740.
- **Coppice Products**
  Tel 01952 432769,
  coppice-products.co.uk
  Provides details of local hedge-layers and locally sourced coppice products.
- **Garden & Wood**
  Tel 01844 279170, gardenandwood.co.uk
  Excellent range of vintage tools.
- **Readyhedge**
  readyhedgeltd.com
  Wholesale nursery providing instant hedging and screening plants.
- **Timeless Tools**
  timelesstools.co.uk
  Wide range of vintage tools.

Traditional county styles

Many different hedge-laying styles have evolved to reflect a region's farming practices and its native trees and shrubs. Here are just a few:

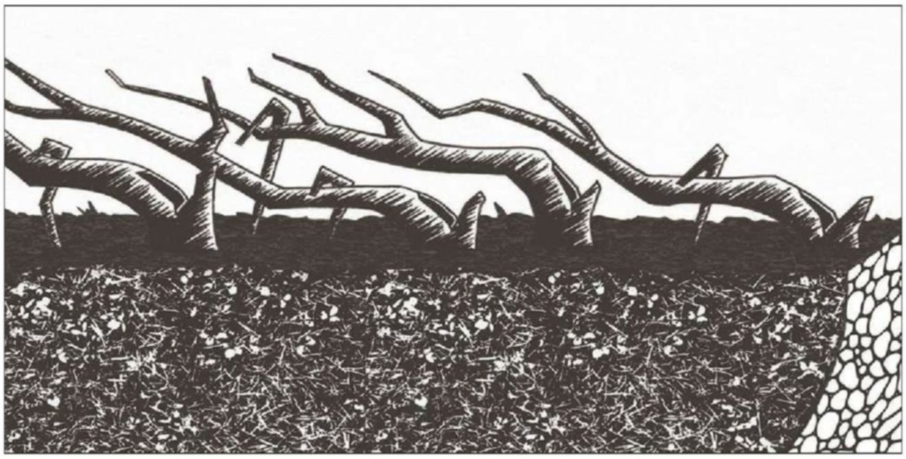
Yorkshire

The Yorkshire style creates a very thin hedge. The hedge is cut close to the ground with plenty of thickness of material along the bottom; new shoots will grow from the already established root system. As with most hedge laying, the hedge is always laid uphill. Sawn stakes and rails are then used to finish the hedge. This method was adopted in Yorkshire because trees suitable for making stakes and binders did not grow well on windy uplands.



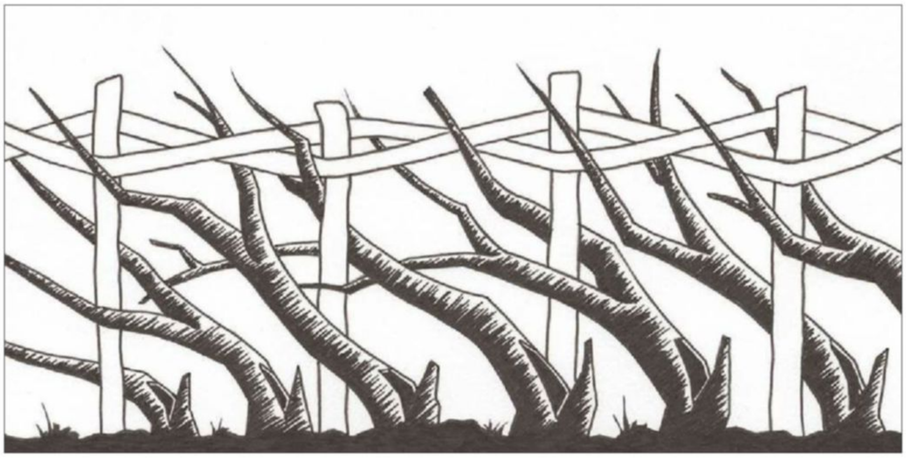
Devon

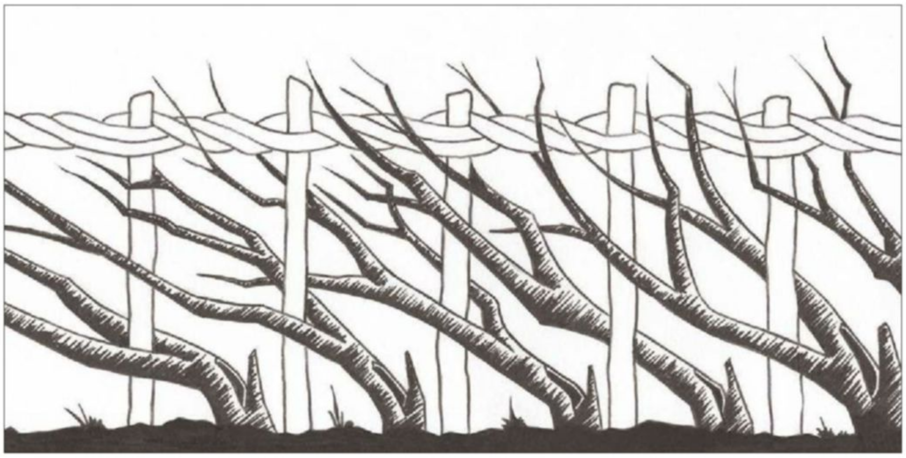
The Devon style hedge is normally laid on top of a bank. The pleachers, or steepers as they are sometimes known in the region, are laid much closer to the horizontal than the usual uphill angle, and are pegged down with crooked hazel sticks that are used to secure the hedge. The bank is an important element as this acts as the main barrier against livestock until the hedge develops.



South of England

In the South of England style the hedge is cut and laid over to create a double brush on both sides. A single line of hazel stakes are driven into the centre of the hedge, with the top bound with hazel binders. Both sides of the hedge are then trimmed immediately after the hedge has been laid. New growth from the base will keep it healthy and thick for years to come.

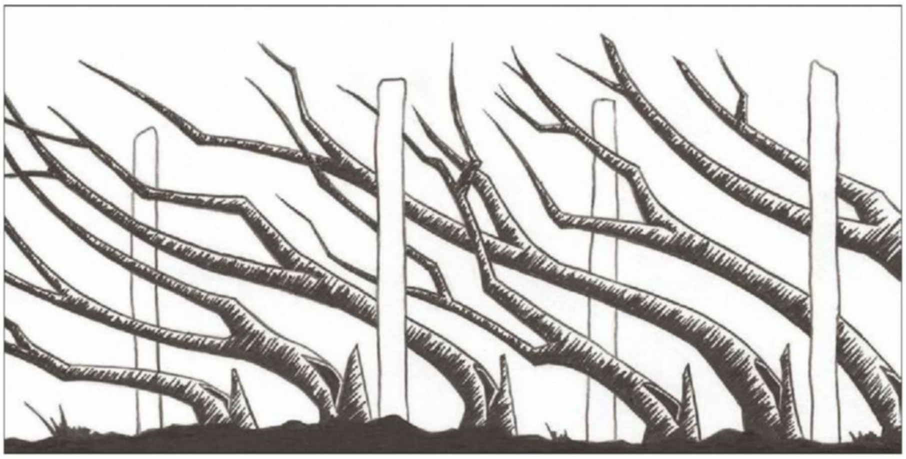




Midland

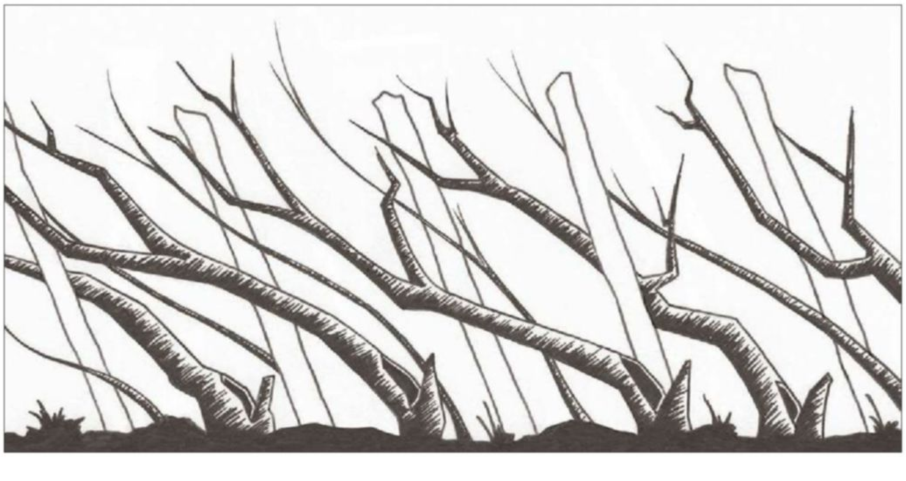
This is also known as the bullock style because it was traditionally used by farmers with large animals, where the hedge needed to be able to withstand the weight of cows pushing against it. Some would argue it is the most attractive of the hedge-laying styles.

A combination of distinctive stakes and binders is used. The binders are woven along the top for maximum strength and the ends wedged behind the stakes.



Somerset

The Somerset style uses a row of stakes that are driven in alternately on either side of the hedge. The stakes hold the pleachers in place, some of which are woven behind the stakes. Once the stakes are in place, any remaining branches, known as brash, are woven between the bent-over pleachers to give structure, thickness and sturdiness to the finished hedge.



Welsh Border

This method uses hazel stakes that are sometimes driven in at a 35-degree slant. Dead wood is used to protect the regrowth from being browsed by stock. The dead wood and live layers are woven along the centre line, with the top and side of the hedge being trimmed. Any large gaps should have new whips planted to fill the spaces. A few long, thin binders are then bound between the stakes.

A mix of chrysanthemums on display at Japan's Botanical Garden of Everyday Life.

Chrysanthemum plants in individual pots are well spaced out on staging erected under open-sided structures. Around them, people are walking, studiously looking at the plants, and occasionally, quietly, discussing something with their companions, often pointing to a detail of the flower. The scene is the Botanical Garden of Everyday Life in Sakura, just outside Tokyo. Although the garden's primary collections are of edible plants, or those used in traditional crafts, there are important collections of ornamental plants, and it's the perfect place in which to explore Japan's long history of plant selection and breeding. Earlier in the year, it was morning glories (*Ipomoea* cultivars) on show and before that *Primula sieboldii*.

Japanese gardeners have long had an interest in taking particular plant species and collecting every available natural variation, classifying and naming them, and then trying to select and breed more. In Britain we had the 'florists' flower' movements where enthusiasts exhibited plants in pots to other aficionados and the general public, but the Japanese went much further, developing an extraordinarily complex floral culture during the Edo period (1603-1868), although the origins are much older.

Of the 30 or so Japanese 'cult plants', it is the chrysanthemum that has become one of the most widely known in the west. Like many other plant species, their roots were in China, almost certainly the species *Chrysanthemum indicum,* which is known to have been grown since the Shang Dynasty (1600-1046 BC), and also possibly *C. zawadskii*. However, it wasn't until the Tang Dynasty (618–907), that growing ornamental chrysanthemums really took off, with many distinct cultivars being selected. Meanwhile, over the water in Japan, everything Chinese was in vogue, including the chrysanthemum, whose flowering in the cooler, drier days of autumn came to symbolise a 'second spring' after the stifling heat of summer. The flower became a popular subject for poetry, and a number of customs developed, such as floating chrysanthemum flowers in *sake* cups for autumn festivals.

During the Edo period, with Japan finally united under the rule of the Shogun, the aristocratic and samurai classes were able to find activities other than war to occupy their time and energies – and chief

Continued on page 82 ▷

The cult of the chrysanthemum

Although not native to Japan, the chrysanthemum has long been the symbol of the country's emperors and has become a near obsession for its gardeners

WORDS **NOËL KINGSBURY** PHOTOGRAPHS **CLAIRE TAKACS**

Chrysanthemum groups

There are many hundreds of chrysanthemum cultivars unique to Japan. The selection shown, with a brief translation of each cultivar name, are just some of the many on display every November at the Botanical Garden of Everyday Life, part of the National Museum of Japanese History. Traditionally, chrysanthemums are divided into groups that reflect the original region of Japan where they were bred: the six groups featured are the most important. The Japanese also employ many methods of meticulous sculptural training, usually with the plants tied to elaborate bamboo frames. The plants shown here, however, have been trained simply to show off the flowers.

USEFUL INFORMATION

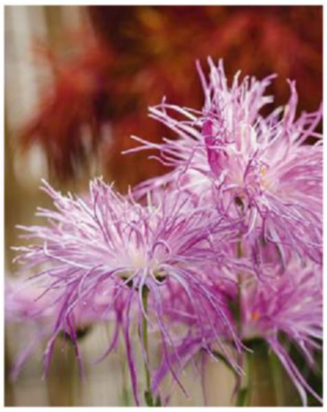
Botanical Garden of Everyday Life, National Museum of Japanese History, Sakura City, Chiba 285-8502, Japan.
Website www.rekihaku.ac.jp/english/

FURTHER READING

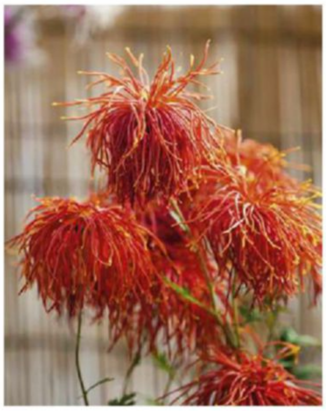
History and Principle of the Traditional Floriculture in Japan by S Kashioka and M Ogisu (Seizo Kashioka in Collaboration with the Kansai Tech Corporation, 1997). Contains a useful chapter on Japanese chrysanthemums.

Ise

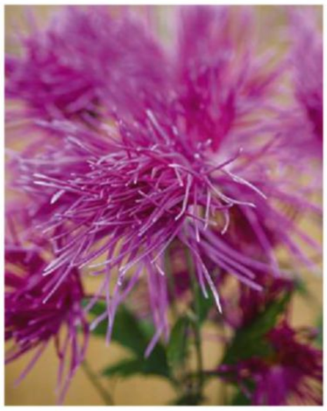
Named for the region where they were first bred, and which has the most sacred Shinto shrine, this group of flowers has traditionally been grown by shrine priests. The petals are narrow and hang down, often with frilly or split ends, creating a tassle-like effect.



'Suihi'
Drunken princess.



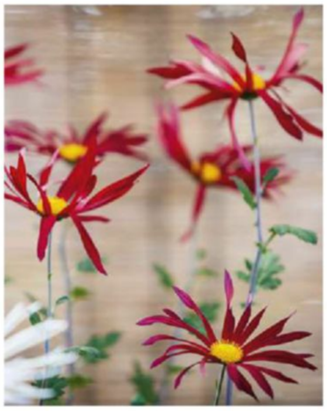
'Gyoukou'
The light of dawn.



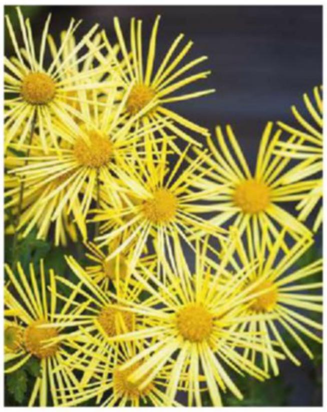
'Benishibori'
Rouge twist.

Higo

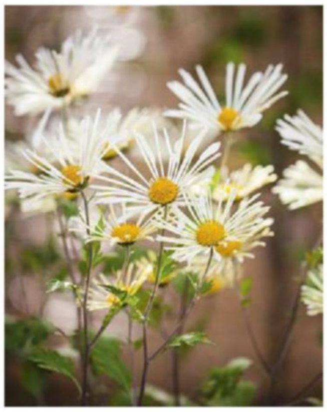
These single, spidery chrysanthemums with narrow petals have a simple unpretentious beauty. However, behind their simplicity lies an intricate set of rules for growing this group. Their height, the number of stems and the number of flowers on each stem is strictly controlled.



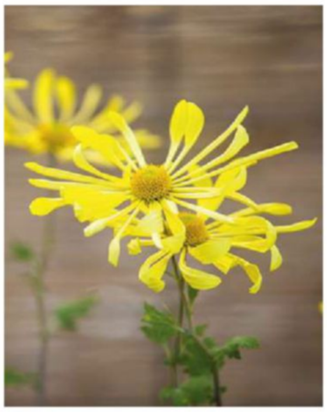
'Otome no mai'
Dance of the maiden.



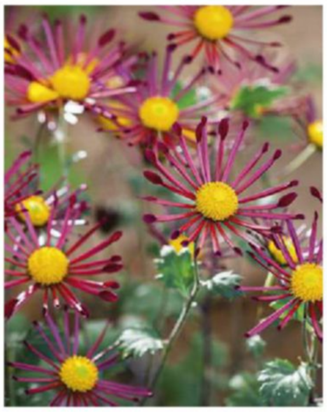
'Kinsei'
The venus.



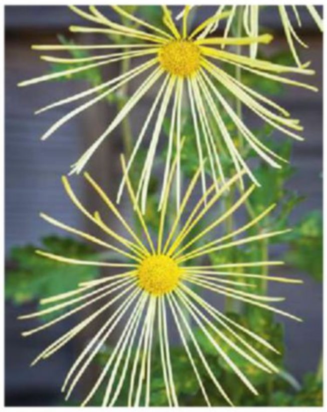
'Madonotsuki'
The moon viewed through a window.



'Shunko den'
Palace of spring joy.



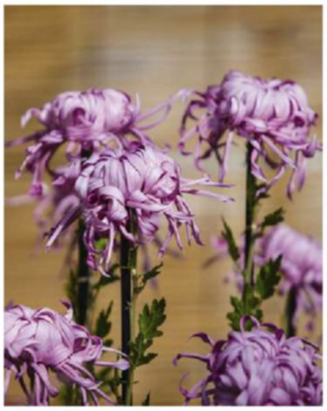
'Houju'
Precious orb.



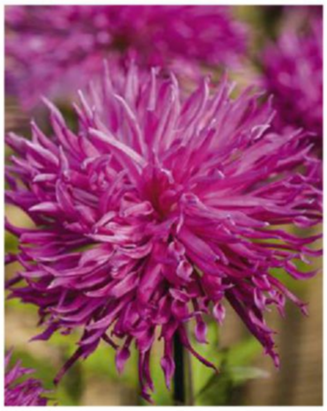
'Matsukaze'
Sound of the wind through pine trees.

Edo

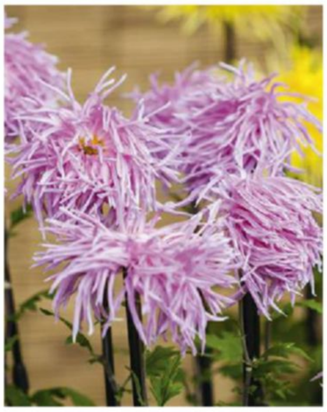
These medium-sized flowers take their name from the area in which they were first bred – Edo, the former name of Tokyo – and became popular. Edo is possibly the most varied of all the groups featured here. Often they have exquisite, twisted, bi-coloured flowers that change their shape as they open, sometimes with the kink, turning back over the centre of the flower, rather like a slightly punkish-looking version of a comb-over.



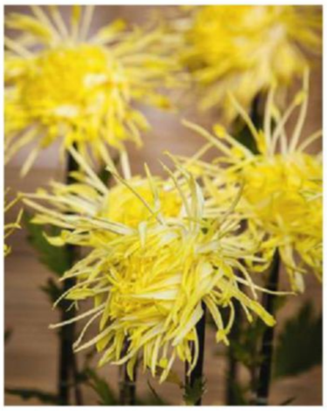
'Hana chiru Sato'
Flower petals blown by the wind.



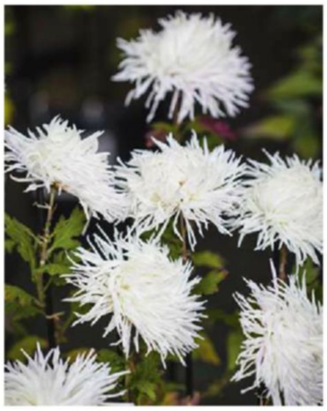
'Shimizu no Ike'
Pond of Shimizu.



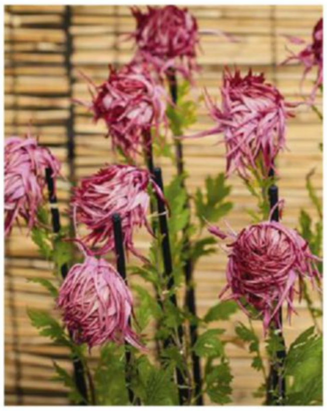
'Edo Houki'
Noble treasure of Edo.



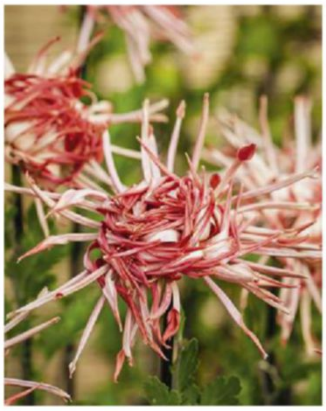
'Oka no Akebono'
The hill in dawn.



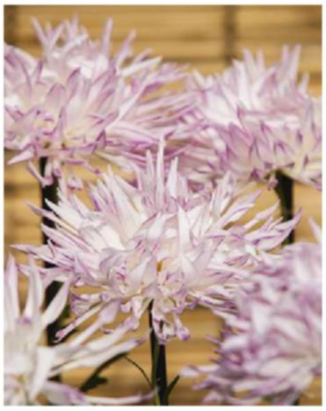
'Shirokoma'
White horse.



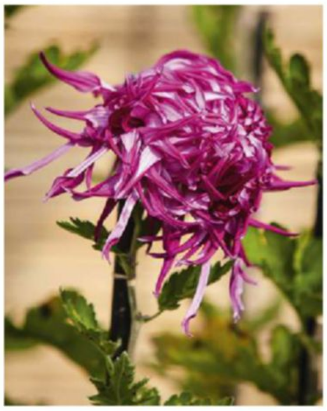
'Hanagumori'
Hazy weather in spring.



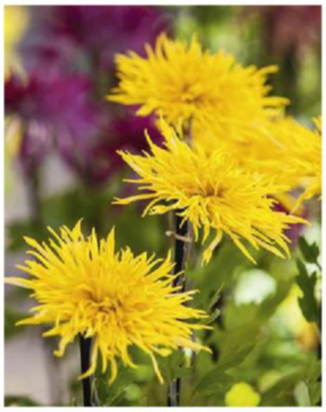
'Heisei Emaki' Picture Scroll of Heisei Era (1989-present).



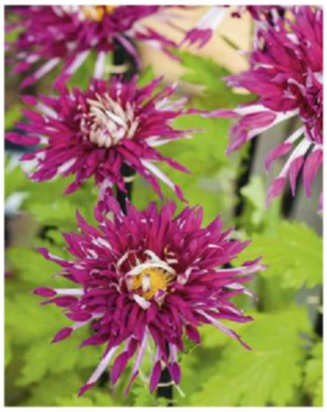
'Tomi no Sakura' Cherry blossom views from a distance.



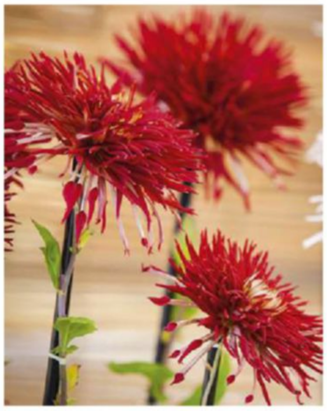
'Shitaya Murasaki'
The purple of the Shitaya.



'Shitaya Kinkaku'
The golden crane of the Shitaya.



'Suibijin' *Drunken Beauty*, the title of a 1905 novel by Kafu Nagai.

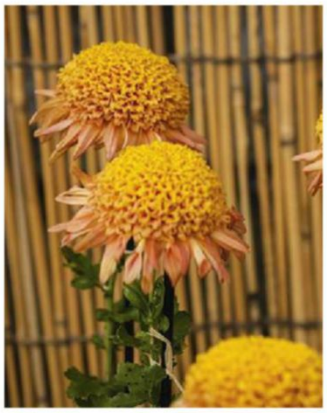


'Yahata Yama'
Mount Yahata.

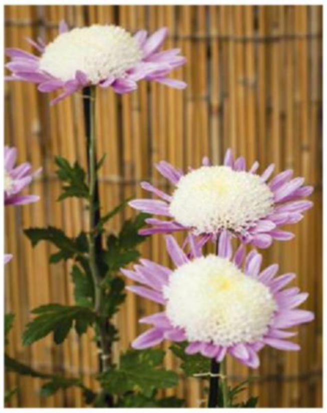
• Turn over for more traditional Japanese chrysanthemums ▷

Choji

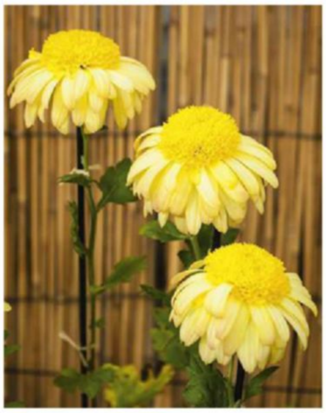
A group whose name refers not to its pedigree but to the shape of its flower. Cultivars in this group are distinguished by their large hemispherical ball of petals at the centre, surrounded by outer petals. The influence of western cultivars is most noticeable in this group.



'Kishi no Bantei' Bantei (a place name in Fukushima) on the bank.



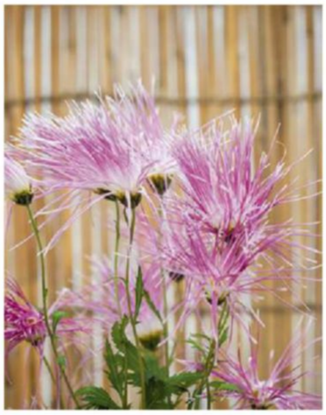
'Ushiwakamaru' Childhood name of Japanese general Yoshitsune Minamoto.



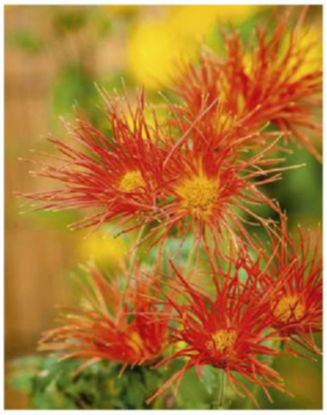
'Kinkomaru'
Globe of golden light.

Saga

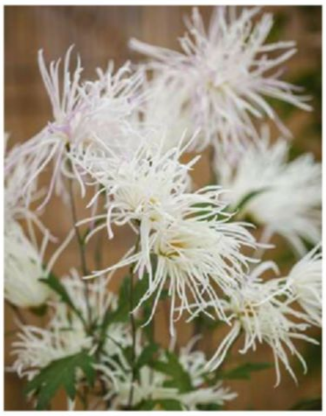
Narrow petals form a delicate loose head. Traditionally cultivated exclusively at the Zen temple of Daikakuji in Kyoto, the plants are descended from a seedling that spontaneously appeared on an island in the temple garden, during the reign of Emperor Saga (809–823).



'Saga no Sakura'
The cherry blossom of Saga.



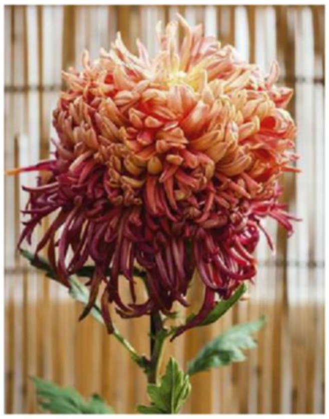
'Saga no Akairo'
Red-flowering Saga type.



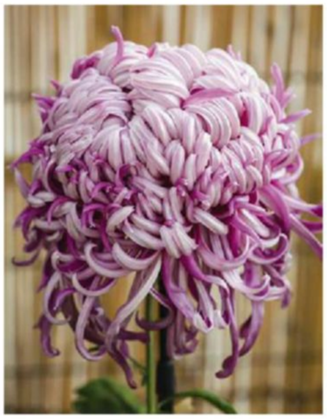
'Saga no Nagare'
The stream of Saga.

Oshu

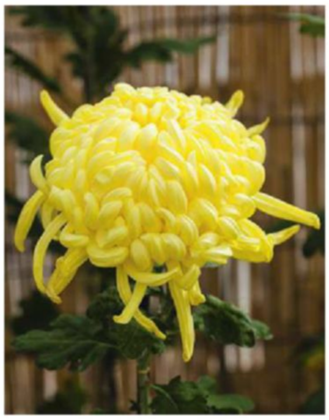
Translated as 'great fist', the heavy twisted outer petals often need the support of special wire structures, while the inner ones are tightly curled up, resembling a fist.



'Eiraku Den'
Palace of pleasure and prosperity.



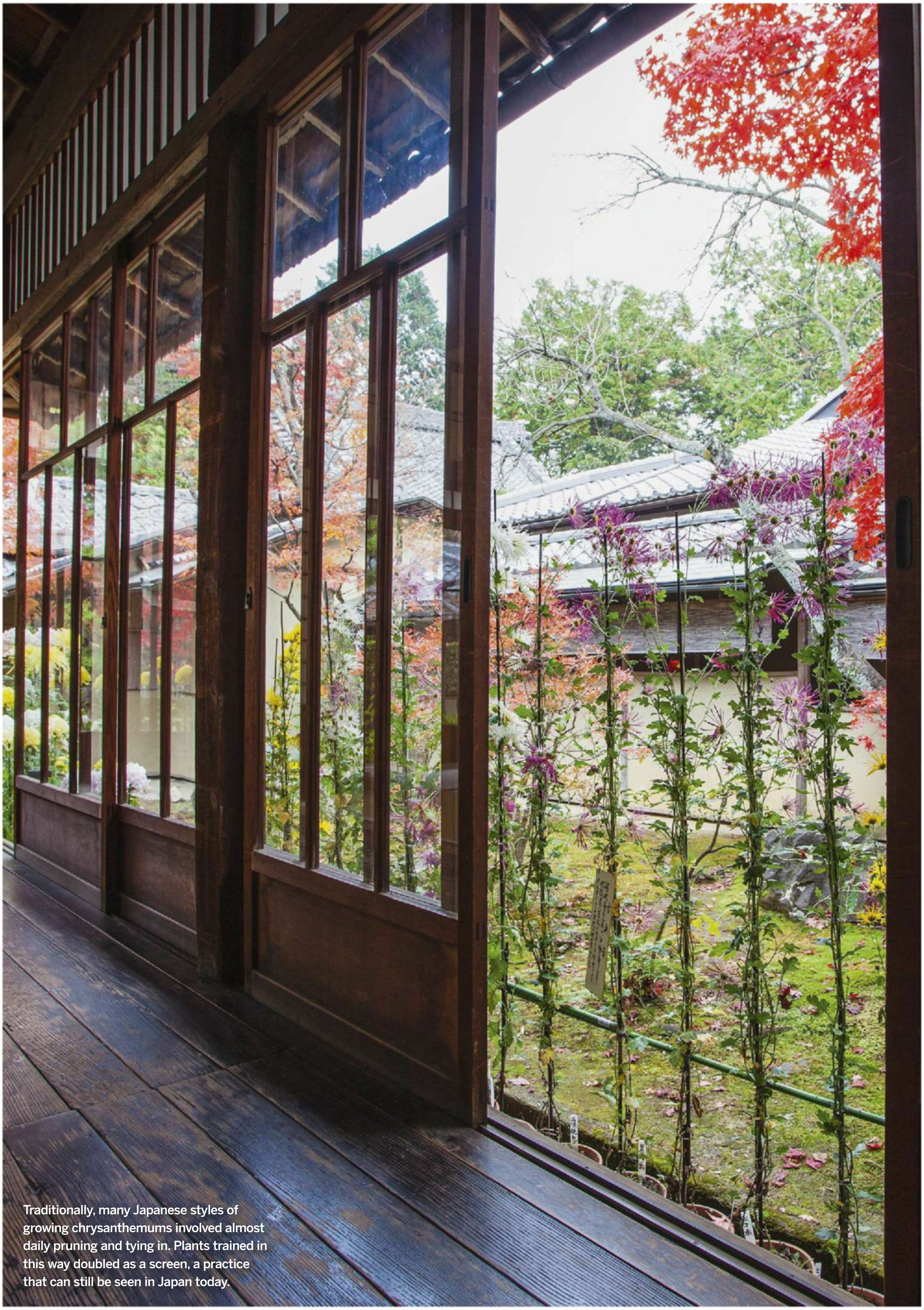
'Aikoku Den'
Place of patriotic spirit.



'Hoshi Tsuki Yo'
Star-filled night.

▷ among these were garden making and plant breeding. During this period many new chrysanthemum cultivars were produced, and novel techniques developed, including the removal of side shoots, so one enormous flower develops instead of multiple small ones. Other techniques aimed at bonsai plants or 'leaning cliff' style, where the plant is trained over a bamboo framework to produce a cascade of flowers.

In the southern Japanese city of Kumamoto, chrysanthemum growing was encouraged by the local lord as part of a programme of spiritual training in the mid 18th century. Today, the city council has a chrysanthemum preservation committee, usually headed by the mayor, to keep the tradition alive. However, according to Yuko Tanabe, a Kumamoto-based garden and landscape designer, traditional Japanese plants are waning in popularity compared to western fashions. "Visiting nurseries, you won't see traditional garden plants," she says. "Petunias, bizzy lizzies, marigold-like bedding plants, herbs… are the main thing in people's minds." Traditional chrysanthemum festivals are still held annually throughout Japan in castle grounds, parks, shrines and local botanic gardens, organised by special interest groups, but as Yuko points out: "Members are elderly and seem to communicate with each other in old-fashioned ways, so it is hard to pick up activities on the internet." The existence of the Botanical Garden of Everyday Life must surely be a lifesaver for this very rich horticultural tradition. □



Traditionally, many Japanese styles of growing chrysanthemums involved almost daily pruning and tying in. Plants trained in this way doubled as a screen, a practice that can still be seen in Japan today.

MANY THANKS TO THE BOTANICAL GARDEN OF EVERYDAY LIFE, NATIONAL MUSEUM OF JAPANESE HISTORY WHERE THE IMAGES FOR THIS FEATURE WERE TAKEN, AND TO YUKO TANABE NAGAMURA FOR HER INVALUABLE HELP IN COMPILING THIS FEATURE.

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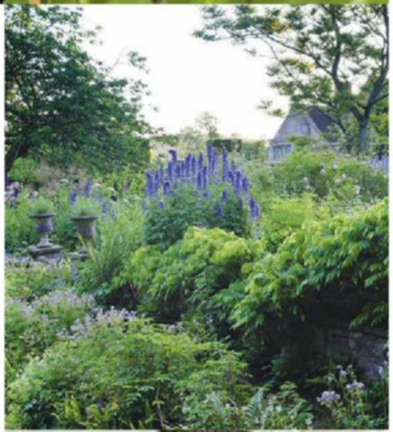
Festival
All
welcome


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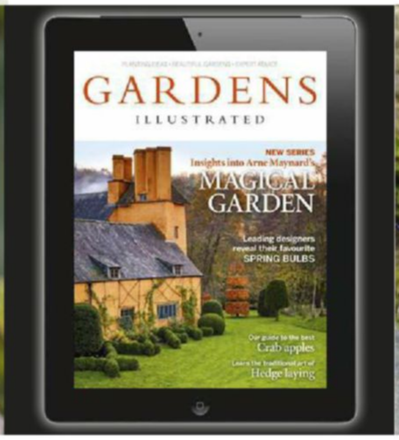
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design

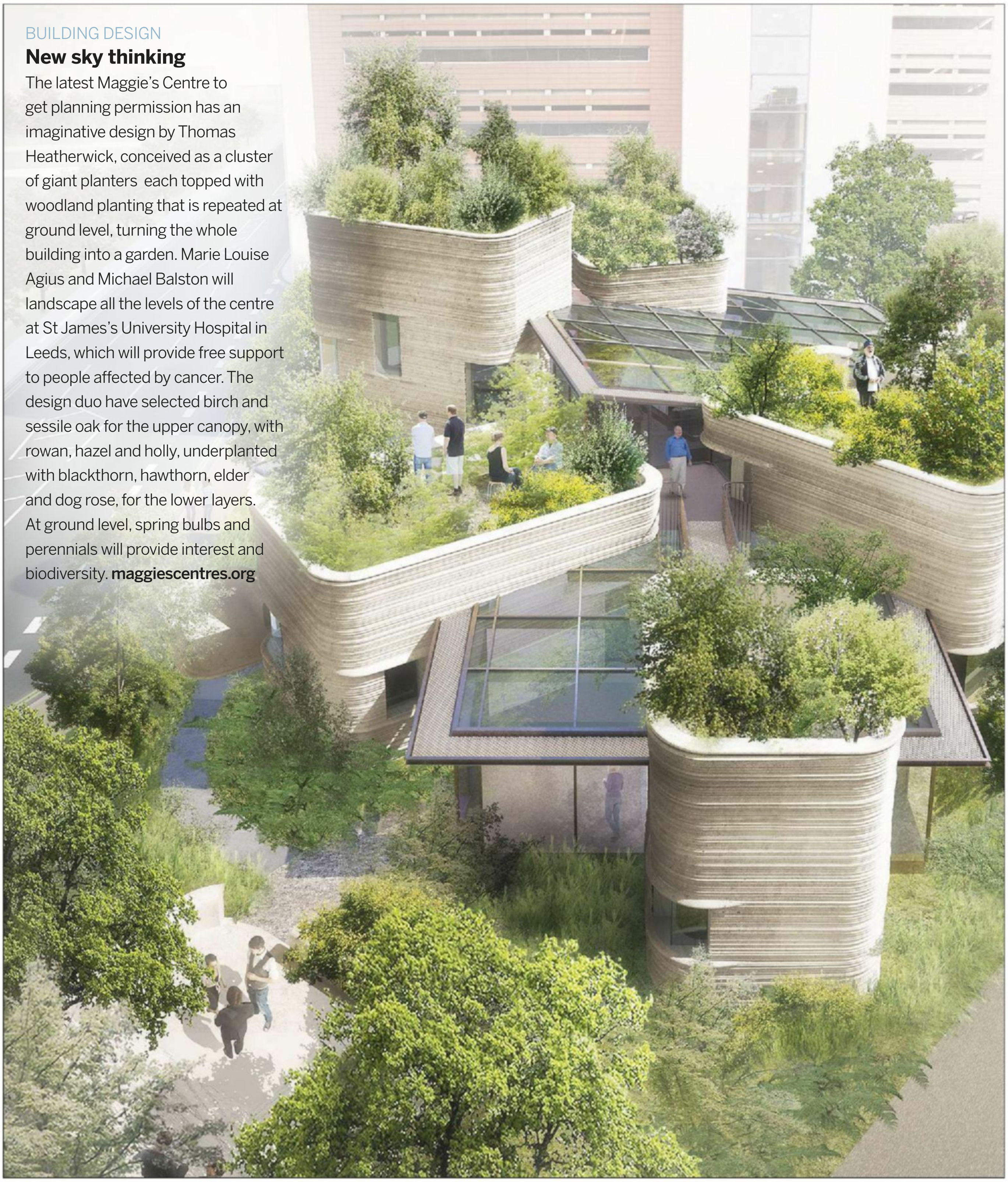
Design update, ideas and sourcebook

UPDATE COMPILED BY ANNIE GATTI

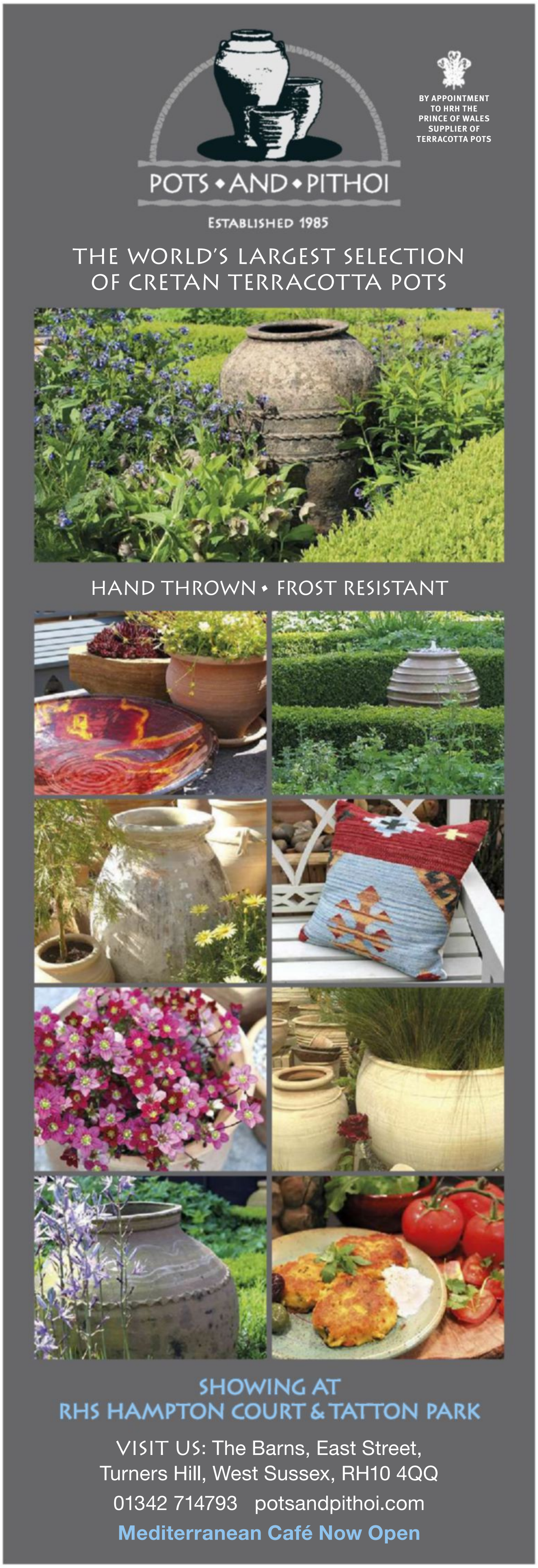
BUILDING DESIGN

New sky thinking

The latest Maggie's Centre to get planning permission has an imaginative design by Thomas Heatherwick, conceived as a cluster of giant planters each topped with woodland planting that is repeated at ground level, turning the whole building into a garden. Marie Louise Agius and Michael Balston will landscape all the levels of the centre at St James's University Hospital in Leeds, which will provide free support to people affected by cancer. The design duo have selected birch and sessile oak for the upper canopy, with rowan, hazel and holly, underplanted with blackthorn, hawthorn, elder and dog rose, for the lower layers. At ground level, spring bulbs and perennials will provide interest and biodiversity. **maggiescentres.org**



HEATHERWICK STUDIO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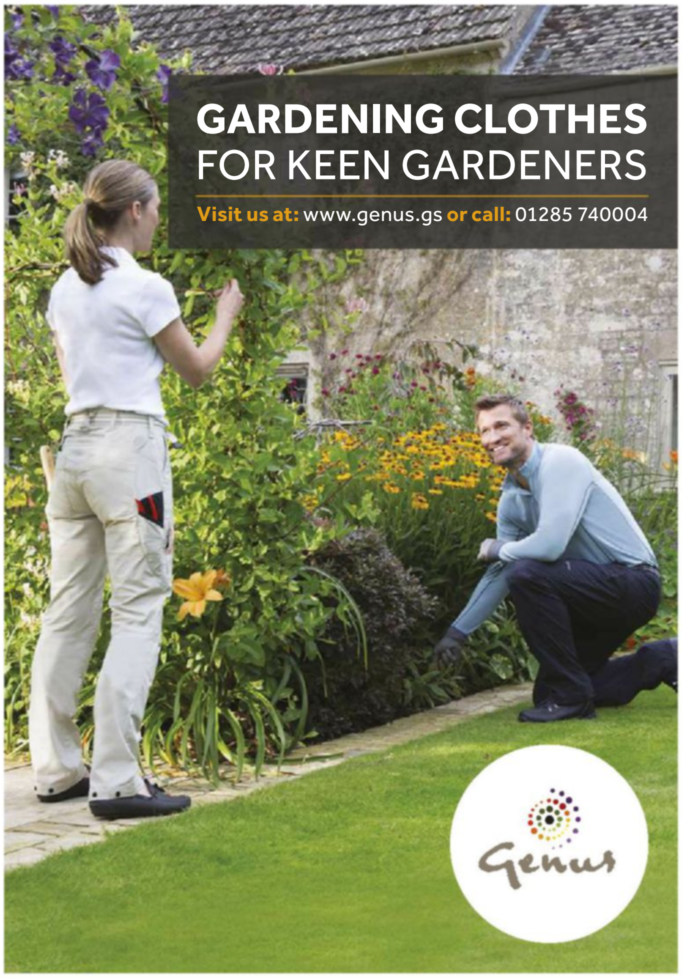
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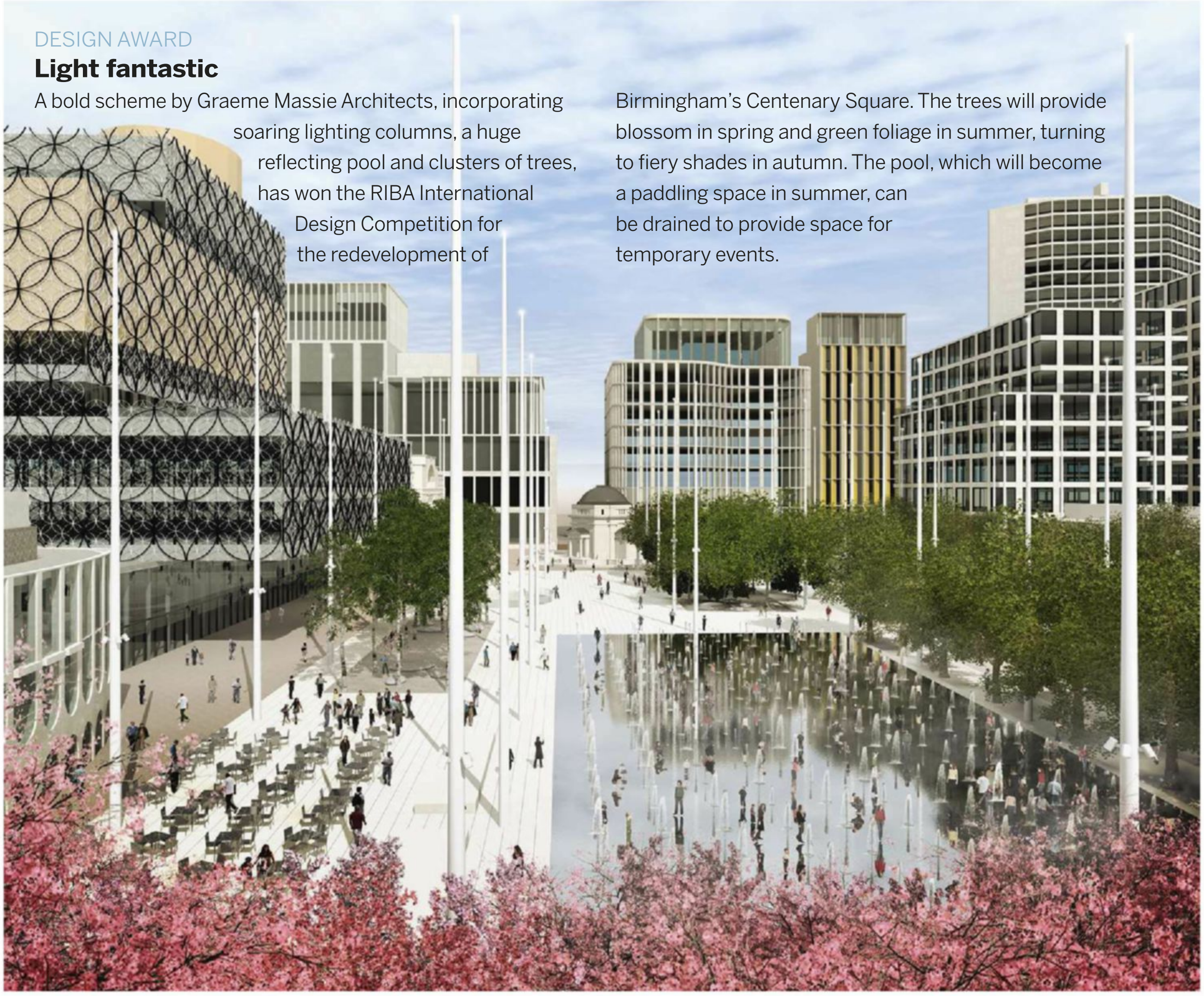
DESIGN AWARD

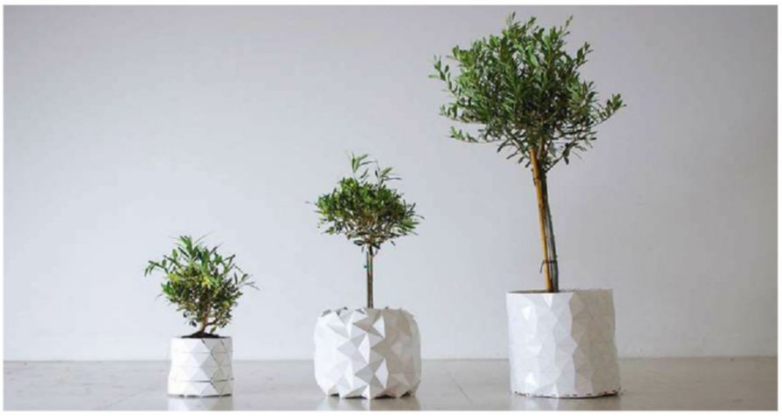
Light fantastic

A bold scheme by Graeme Massie Architects, incorporating soaring lighting columns, a huge reflecting pool and clusters of trees, has won the RIBA International Design Competition for the redevelopment of Birmingham's Centenary Square. The trees will provide blossom in spring and green foliage in summer, turning to fiery shades in autumn. The pool, which will become a paddling space in summer, can be drained to provide space for temporary events.



GOOD TO GROW

Royal College of Art graduates Begum and Bike Ayaskan have used origami patterns as the starting point for their innovative pots, which expand as a plant grows. Each polypropylene pot is made up of tessellating triangles that allow its volume to increase by more than five times, cleverly eliminating the need to repot. ayaskan.com



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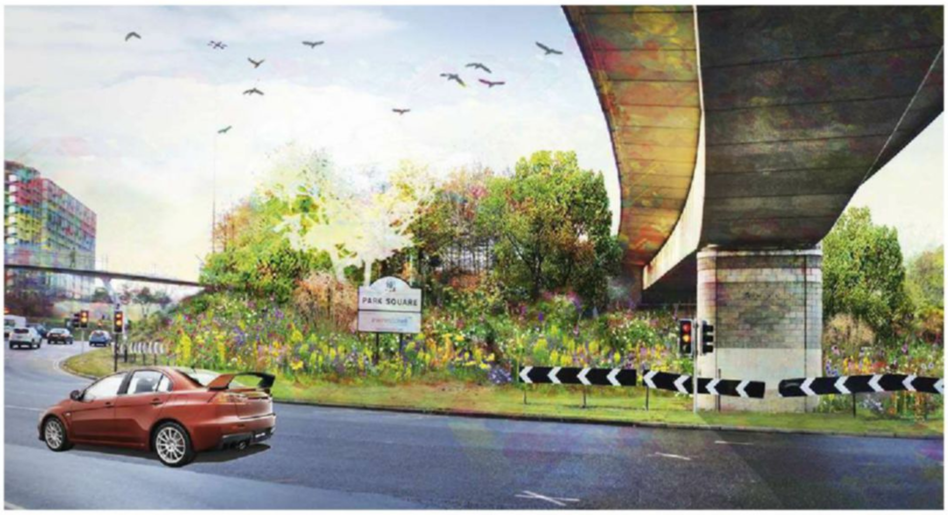

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

In the round

Seven major roundabouts in Glasgow, Sheffield, Leeds, Birmingham, Swindon, Liverpool and Woking will get a floral facelift next year. The Enterprise Roundabout Project, a collaboration between Enterprise Rent-A-Car, the Department of Landscape at the University of Sheffield and Pictorial Meadows, will see roundabouts transformed into vibrant wild-flower meadows. Nigel Dunnett from the University of Sheffield has designed the naturalistic plantings, which will incorporate a mix of shrubs, perennials, bulbs and annuals, to be sustainable.

BOWLED OVER

It's already proved a favourite with top garden designers, and now the elegant lily bowl from Urbis has been shortlisted for the 2015 SGD Product of the Year. Made from glass-reinforced concrete with a black waterproof interior coating, it's 39cm high with a diameter of 118cm and is available in a range of finishes from stony slate, rusty, sandstone, verdigris to dolomite white. Prices start at £1,028, plus delivery (or from £856.80 if used as a planter). Tel 01759 373839, urbisdesign.co.uk

RESTORATION

Park life

Holywells Park in Ipswich has completed a £3.5-million restoration project thanks to funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund, Ipswich Borough Council and Friends of Holywells Park. The London-based environmental planning and design consultancy LDA Design has restored many historic features, including a reinstated Grade II-listed orangery and 19th-century stable block, which now houses a new café. The 66-acre park has been enriched with a new maze, a restored pond network and formal terraced gardens.

Notebook

- Troy Scott Smith, the head gardener at Sissinghurst, has joined the **English Gardening School** as a tutor on the school's one-year Good Gardening Diploma. **englishgardeningschool.co.uk**
- A Symposium on Gardens of the Future will be held at **Natur im Garten conference** in Tulin, Austria, 9-11 October. Speakers include Nigel Dunnett, Karin Standler and Anna Leithner. **naturimgarten.at/award-english**
- Capel Manor College, in conjunction with the Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester, has started a new **Foundation Degree in Garden Design and Plantsmanship** at the college's Enfield centre. The degree will take two years full-time or four years part-time. **capel.ac.uk**
- US-based landscape architect James Corner, renowned for his work on New York's High Line and London's Olympic Park, will deliver this year's **Landscape Institute Jellico lecture** at the University of Reading on 22 October. He will also mark the publication of his new book *The High Line: Foreseen-Unforeseen* with a lecture at the University of Greenwich on 19 November. **landscapeinstitute.co.uk**
- You can find *Green Bridges: a Literature Review* by Land Use Consultants for Natural England, which explores the value of **planted bridges** as wildlife corridors for improving local ecosystems, at **publications.naturalengland.org.uk**

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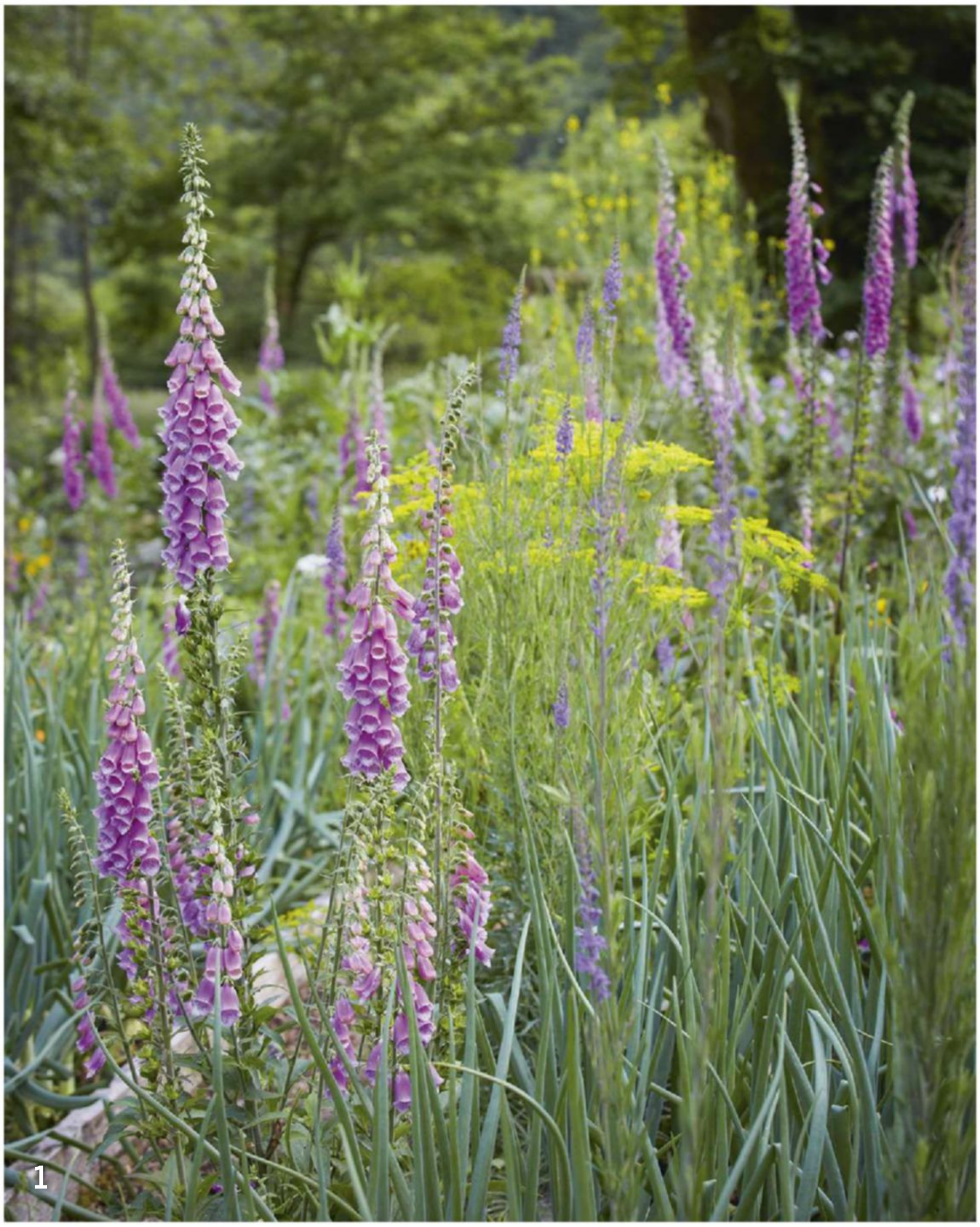

1 Call of the wild

Native foxgloves (*Digitalis purpurea*), wild parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*) and the delicate purple *Linaria purpurea* bring a spontaneous sparkle to a vegetable plot at Sue Mabberley's garden, Nant y Bedd in Gwent. Self-seeding, wayside flowers such as these often grow in spectacular swathes making them easy native flowers to establish.

1 BRITT WILLOUGHBY DYER

Wild flowers in gardens

Wildness and gardening can sometimes make uneasy bedfellows but introducing wild species into your planting scheme can bring a natural beauty, as well as having ecological benefits

WORDS SARAH PRICE

Sarah Price is one of the UK's most sought-after garden designers who won worldwide recognition for her designs for the 2012 Olympic Park.

2 MMGI / MARIANNE MAJERUS. BRYAN'S GROUND, HEREFORDSHIRE / DESIGN: SIMON DORRELL AND DAVID WHEELER;
3 MMGI / BOB GIBBONS; 4 MMGI / MARIANNE MAJERUS. DESIGN: CHRISTOPHER BRADLEY-HOLE

2 Layers of interest

At Bryan's Ground in Herefordshire, owned and designed by David Wheeler and Simon Dorrell, cow parsley and meadow buttercup create a magical understory to the birch trees, while the solidity of the yew hedges are contrasted with the delicate forms of shrubs.

3 Patchwork planet

Plants that grow together in the wild often combine well in a similar garden setting. Here the coastal flowers sea kale and thrift look spectacular in early June at Cogden Beach in Dorset. A lesson in keeping your palette simple and repeating a few plants for large-scale effect.

4 Into the long grass

Often the most interesting parts of a garden are the areas where garden plants grow alongside wild flora. In this design by Christopher Bradley-Hole *Actaea*, *Carex muskingumensis*, and *Eupatorium maculatum* (Atropurpureum Group) 'Riesenschirm' flow into a meadow of long grass. These tough perennials will grow with significantly less vigour in a competitive environment of vigorous grasses.

My favourite gardens have no borders. Instead, plants grow in swathes of meadow-like colour and texture, it's only the pathways and the occasional seat, clipped hedge or mossy urn that reminds me I'm in a garden. The hand of the gardener is invisible and wild flowers flourish, often growing intermingled with garden perennials. A single wild flower can look fragile, but when grown en masse they exert a powerful presence.

When designing with plants that are native or naturalised in Britain my first inspiration is the way they grow in the wild; their conditions, their companions and their pattern of distribution and flowering succession. I also think back to my visits to the Dutch *Heem* or habitat parks – ecological gardens that bring an exaggerated and thrilling version of nature right into towns and cities. It's well worth making a pilgrimage to the most famous, the Jac P Thijsse Park, in Amstelveen near Amsterdam, which takes its name from the pioneering conservationist who created it.

Wild-flower plantings require sensitive management and an editing eye. But they also need creativity, willingness to experiment and to learn from both triumphs and failures alike. Wild flowers thrive in harsh conditions where competitive grasses are at a disadvantage; poor soil, cracks between stones and extreme damp are examples of niche habitats where certain species will flourish. Low-growing, sun loving species such as *Sedum acre*, thymes, especially *Thymus praecox* and *T. pulegioides*, *Dianthus deltoides* and *Armeria maritima* will create successions of colour between paving stones or in the nooks of walls. *Ajuga reptans*, *Viola reichenbachiana*, *V. riviniana*, *V. odorata*, wood anemone and the delicate grass *Melica uniflora* are great options for creating a low carpet in ▷

5

5 Bold beauty

Cornfield annuals are a beautiful and temporary quick-growing nurse crop for fertile soil. In Rachel James's coastal garden in Dorset an annual mix of *Papaver rhoeas* and *Centaurea cyanus* has been boldly sown directly up to the farmhouse. Experiment with different annual mixes or adapt and make your own.

6

6 Wetland natives

Our native wetland species are suited to contemporary and ecological planting designs. At the London Wetland Centre in Barnes, Arne Maynard's curved walls of split oak logs provide rich habitats for wildlife and fungi and also give the wetland setting scale and context.

7

7 Red carpet

Ranscombe Farm Reserve in Kent, which is managed by Plantlife, the UK's leading wild-flower conservation charity, is famous for its arable wild flowers and orchids. Here several varieties of wild poppies form red carpets along the edges of the farm's wheat fields from late May. Viper's bugloss (*Echium vulgare*) and St John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) create a dazzling verge of colour.

5 MMGI / MARIANNE MAJERUS, DESIGN: RACHEL JAMES; 6 MARIANNE MAJERUS / MMGI, WETLAND CENTRE, BARNES / DESIGN: ARNE MAYNARD; 7 GAP PHOTOS / JONATHAN BUCKLEY

▷ shaded woodland corners. Opportunist pioneer species, love well-drained gritty soil and sun. The slender spires of yellow *Reseda luteola* look magnificent growing in great swathes alongside the rich-blue of *Echium vulgare*. Both species need space for their architecture to be appreciated and need deadheading to be kept under control.

Within sunny perennial borders I grow purple-pink strains of *Daucus carota* and *Centaurea nigra*, an excellent nectar plant that flowers for up to eight weeks. Cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*) looks beautiful but you need to be vigilant about cutting the stems down before it self-seeds and divide it before clumps get too large. The annual, occasionally biennial, *Torilis japonica* is similar to cow parsley but shorter with finer leaves and flowers from July to September. It's a good mixer as it's airy and will stand up alone. Tussock-forming grasses are easier to combine with perennials, as they won't send out spreading, competitive roots. *Deschampsia cespitosa*'s evergreen tussocks suppress weeds making it ideal for colonising wilder areas. It's relatively short lived, so remove old plants that are starting to die back and in their place plant species, such as *Leucanthemum vulgare*. I add *Molinia caerulea* for upright, luminous accents and *Succisa pratensis* for its late summer flowers.

Observing and growing wild flowers encourages you to think imaginatively at both macro and micro scales. The humble ox-eye daisy and knapweed, grown en masse, can be as exciting as singular specimens of the rare and obscure tall pink corncockle, and the internationally rare broad-leaved cudweed (*Filago pyramidata*). Wild flowers are all around us so there's never a shortage of inspiration, from celebrated botanical sites and nature reserves to anonymous roadside verges and railway cuttings. ◻

8

8 JASON INGRAM, DESIGN: PAM LEWIS, STICKY WICKET

8 Flowering lawn

At her garden, Sticky Wicket in Dorset, Pam Lewis is a pioneer in the use of wild flowers. Her species-rich lawn is not only beautiful but also supports a surprising range of wildlife. Flowering lawns of yarrow, bird's foot trefoil, white clover and prunella can be mown when needed and will stay greener during drought.

Wild flower suppliers

- **British Wild Flower Plants** wildflowers.co.uk
- **Emorsgate Seeds** wildseed.co.uk
- **Landlife** wildflower.co.uk
- **Pictorial Meadows** pictorialmeadows.co.uk

Further reading

These books are full of wisdom, detail and inspiration on wild flowers and their establishment.

- *Making a Wildflower Meadow* by Pam Lewis (Frances Lincoln, 2003).
- *Meadows* by Christopher Lloyd (Timber Press, 2004).
- *Where Have All The Flowers Gone? Restoring Wildflowers to the Countryside* by Charles Flower (Papadakis, 2008).

Practical tips

- Take clues and inspiration for what species to grow from the planting that grows abundantly in your local area.
- Wild flowers have a reputation for being fickle, so start with small trial patches to see what is likely to be achievable.
- Sow yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) in the autumn to increase diversity. This annual root is a hemiparasite on grass and once established it can reduce the vigour of the grass by up to 50 per cent, which can encourage a greater display of wild flowers.
- A meadow garden is more about sensitive management than conventional gardening. If you're lucky enough to have sufficient space to allow you to create a sizeable meadow you'll need to give some consideration as to how you will get your meadow cut, and raked. It's best to mow your meadows patch by patch at different times of year to increase biodiversity; tackling the most grassy and fertile areas first. Local Conservation Meadow groups are invaluable at providing support for wild-flower meadow conservation services and contacts for the contractors cutting it.

Planting wildflower plugs in grass

- Planting plugs into a dense grassy sword is unlikely to be successful. Equally, you cannot just sow wild-flower seed into an area of established grass. It simply will not work.
- Cut the grass as low as you can get it. If there is a 'thatch' then scarify it as you need to get the plugs into contact with the soil.
- The best time to plant is from autumn to late spring, when the ground is cool and damp.

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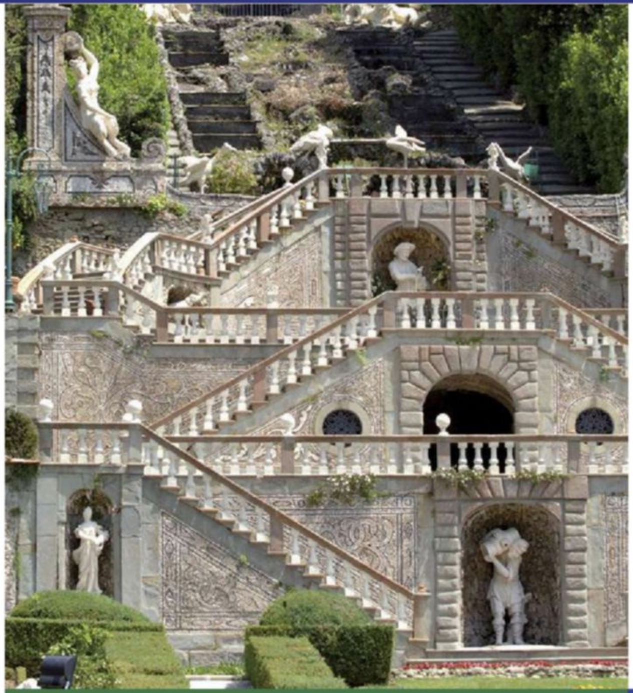

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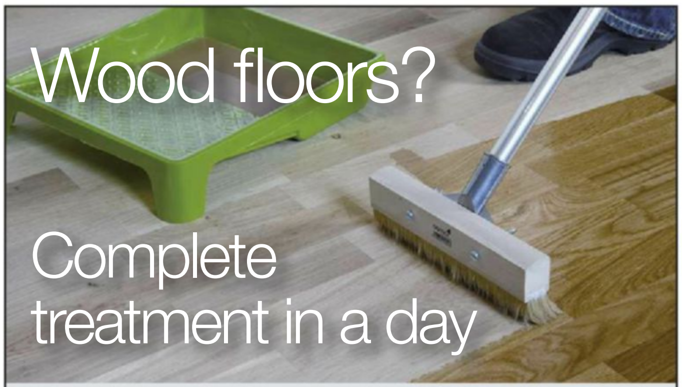
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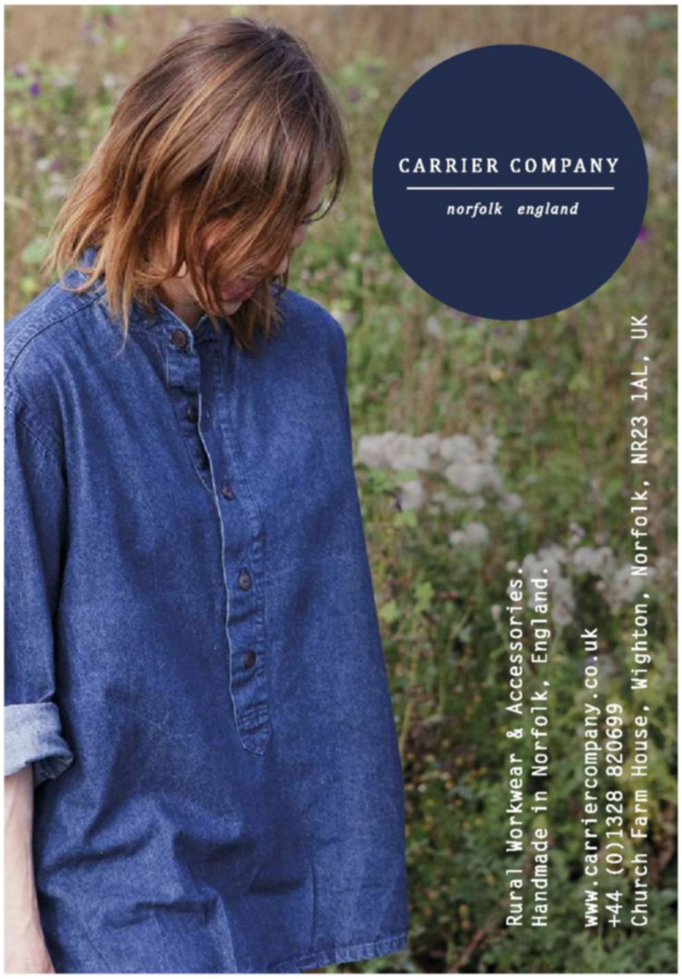

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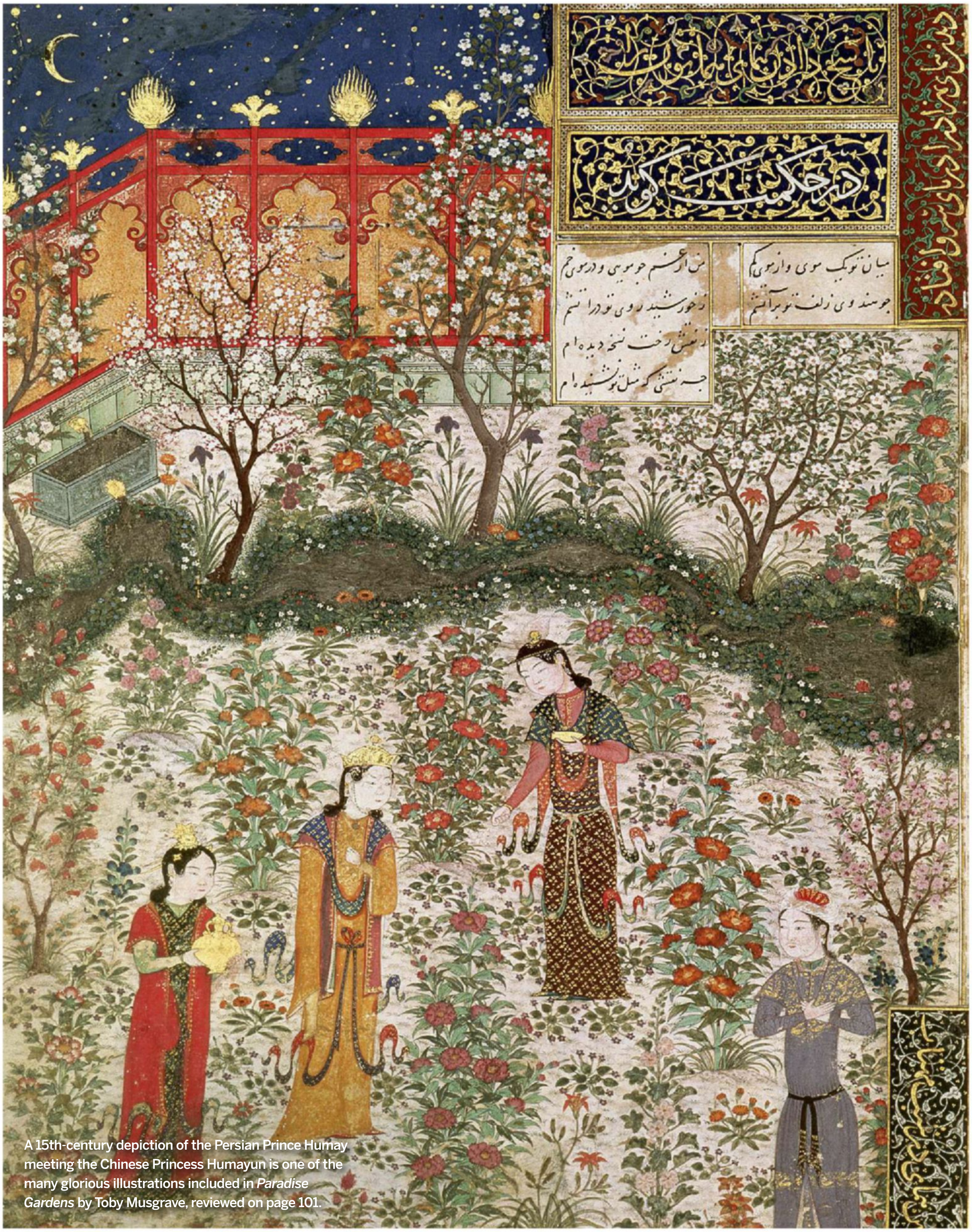
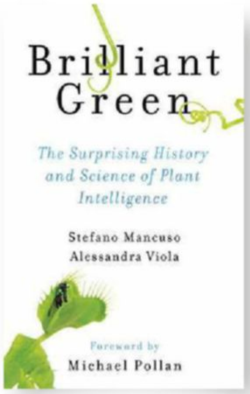


A 15th-century depiction of the Persian Prince Humay meeting the Chinese Princess Humayun is one of the many glorious illustrations included in *Paradise Gardens* by Toby Musgrave, reviewed on page 101.

MUSÉE DES ARTS DÉCORATIFS, PARIS

Book reviews



BRILLIANT GREEN: THE SURPRISING HISTORY AND SCIENCE OF PLANT INTELLIGENCE

By Stefano Mancuso
and Alessandra Viola

Island Press, £12.99
ISBN 978-1610916035

A punchy, readable but erudite little book that introduces many key aspects of plant science to the general reader.

Reviewer Noël Kingsbury is a writer and plantsman.

'Plants' and 'intelligence' are two concepts we don't generally put together; invariably we think of plants as static, passive and entirely reactive. This book tries to put pay to this prejudice. Intelligence is really only a starting point for what amounts to an eloquent and very readable primer of basic plant physiology, looking at how plants analyse their environment, react to it, co-ordinate their various parts, communicate with other plants and with animals. As mammals, our sensory, nervous and other bodily systems are located in discrete organs; with plants these functions are dispersed over their entire physical being, which makes it difficult for us to appreciate just how intelligent they are. In fact plants are not only very clever at making the most of their environment, they can be amazingly manipulative too of other plants, pollinators, symbiotic fungi, and even of us.

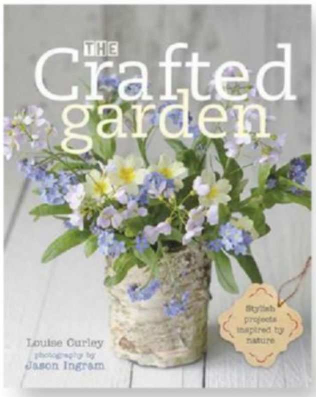
Despite covering much technical ground, the authors keep everything simple and easy to follow for the non-botanist.

Occasionally, one wishes for more in the way of concrete examples to back up the claims made, but there are enough examples to make this not too much of a problem. Much of the content is a reworking of well-established material, but relevant recent research findings are included too, as well as the admission that there are things we simply don't know, such as why some plant species, including members of the pea family, fold up their leaves and 'sleep' at night.

In the final chapter the authors return to stressing that plants need greater appreciation and respect, and raise the intriguing question as to whether they have rights.

A thoughtful, perhaps even provocative end to a book that anyone who has even the smallest interaction with plants should find fascinating.

Book offer
RRP £12.99. **Reader offer price £11.69** including p&p*.



THE CRAFTED GARDEN: STYLISH PROJECTS INSPIRED BY NATURE

By Louise Curley, photography by Jason Ingram

Frances Lincoln, £16.99
ISBN 978-0711236295

Fifty creative projects, grouped by season, to transform home-grown and foraged plant finds into ornaments and decorations.

Reviewer Jodie Jones is a garden writer.

Cardiganed crusader Louise Curley is a quietly outspoken critic of the international cut-flower industry. Her first book, *The Cut Flower Patch* (which won the Garden Media Guild Award 2014 for Best Practical Book), presented a well-argued case against the iniquities of intensive monoculture on a massive scale and the poor employment practices that are a feature of commercial flower growing in certain countries. Her solution was simple – we should all try and grow our own cut flowers.

Now in *The Crafted Garden*, Louise continues her gentle call to arms with a collection of 50 seasonal natural craft projects, ranging from a sealed terrarium to a foraged Christmas fairy decoration. Most similar books are written by stylists with infuriatingly little understanding of the laws of nature. Louise, in contrast, is a knowledgeable gardener and life-long crafter who tells you which projects can be dumped straight on the compost heap when they reach the end of their decorative life.

She makes it clear that some projects, including the daisy-studded lawn in a tea cup, will give only a fleeting effect, but others, such as the lichen star she has hanging from her kitchen door, will last for years.

The book also includes innovative techniques, and cultivation advice for key plants, with recommendations of particularly fine cultivars, such as the wonderful *Nigella damascena* 'Albion Black Pod' with extraordinarily beautiful plum-coloured seed pods.

Louise writes, 'I am a great believer that if we immerse ourselves in the natural world we are much more likely to care for and want to protect it.' With beguiling photographs by Jason Ingram and a comprehensive list of resources, she has produced a book that will inspire and enable anyone to join her.

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GARDEN MAGIC: HOW TO MAKE THE ORDINARY SPECIAL

By George Carter, photography by Harry Cory Wright

Double-Barrelled Books, £25
ISBN 978-0957150058

A peek inside the personal garden of a leading designer provides an overview of some of the formal design principles and ideas.

Reviewer Tim Richardson is a garden critic and regular columnist.

The formalist George Carter has one of the most distinctive voices in contemporary garden design. Here he follows the familiar trend of a designer publishing a book devoted to his own work. I was not well-disposed to *Garden Magic* on first glance – the self-congratulatory title put me off as did its oddly sized typefaces and poor colour reproduction.

But its content brought me round instantly, because despite the potentially fey nature of the work – ‘whimsical’ design founded on 17th- and 18th-century principles – all of the advice and observation is sturdily couched in reality and founded in a good knowledge of garden history. If you want to know how to ornament an outside lavatory in the style of 18th-century architect James Gibbs, using only plywood and paint, then this is the book to consult. There is also a remarkable step-by-step which reveals how to turn a standard garden shed into a neo-classical moment. So yes, I admit there is an element of magic to this.

Carter has designed many gardens, most in East Anglia, but this book is only about his own garden, Silverstone Farm in Norfolk. In a series of pithy paragraphs and large photographs, he describes with unpretentious precision how and why he decided to make a garden of topiary and enclosures, and why he has been ‘trying to eliminate colour’. At one point Carter even makes a surprising but persuasive comparison between minimalist sculptor Donald Judd and 18th-century engravers.

The direct style of this book contrasts pleasingly with the self-indulgent, pseudo-philosphical musings of other well-known garden designers. The directory of suppliers at the end ought to prove useful both to garden owners and other designers, as Carter has only listed people whose work he implicitly trusts.

Book offer
RRP £25. **Reader offer price £22.50** including p&p*.

The Good Garden
The Landscape Architecture of
Edmund Hollander Design

THE GOOD GARDEN: THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE OF EDMUND HOLLANDER DESIGN

By Anne Raver, photography by Charles Mayer

Monacelli Press, £50
ISBN 978-1580934152

A beautifully illustrated book that provides many original and inspiring ideas for landscape and garden designers.

Reviewer Rosemary Alexander runs the English Gardening School.

Documenting the work of Edmund Hollander Design, a landscape architecture practice founded in Manhattan in 1991, this is landscape design on a grand scale. The four main chapters are broken up into individual sections, such as Plantings to Complement Architecture, Plants as Architecture, Speciality Gardens, which includes butterfly gardens, seaside gardens, and walled gardens, and Landscapes Inspired by Nature.

Summarising the creative influences behind each design, the chapters describe the key elements and practical advantages of decisions, such as keeping existing trees to dictate a curving layout of an entry drive, or placing boxwood where it will not receive any overhead irrigation to help resist blight.

The sumptuous photographs by Charles Mayer show beautifully manicured estates in the exclusive Hamptons and upstate New York, but also formal garden rooms, waterside settings, productive gardens and meadows. Architectural elements, such as the meticulous detailing of entrances, stairs and paths, and boardwalks, are well documented. The section on shade gardens, showing the much-used crepe myrtle (*Lagerstroemia* ‘Natchez’) and other plants, such as azalea, astilbe and ferns, which fare well in the more extreme eastern US climate, show a restrained yet effective planting scheme, many favouring a green and white palette. The explanatory text by Anne Raver is an absorbing read, digging deeply into the reasoning behind each design, describing a host of situations, such as the repetition of river birch (*Betula nigra* ‘Cully’) and hostas as allées, or the merging of prairie grasses to enhance a coastal landscape.

Although it’s expensive and features some plants unfamiliar to UK readers, this is a thought-provoking reference book.

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1

2

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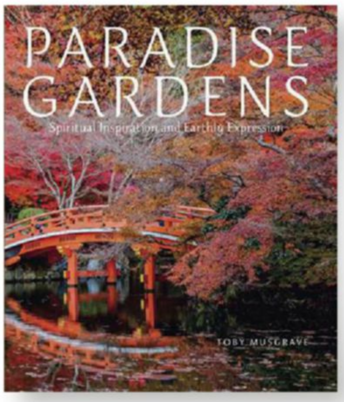

PARADISE GARDENS: SPIRITUAL INSPIRATION AND EARTHLY EXPRESSION

By Toby Musgrave

Frances Lincoln, £30
ISBN 978-0711236530

An exploration of the central role played by both gardens and plants in the religious and spiritual life of humankind.

Reviewer Ambra Edwards is a garden historian and garden writer.

The premise of this book – that every belief system in human history has been intimately bound up with plants and gardens – is fascinating. Plants have served as metaphors for paradise, as manifestations of godly attributes, as pathways to the divine and, since the dawn of time, have been imbued with mystic meanings, from the Celtic oak to the pristine lotus bloom revered by Buddhists and Hindus alike.

Paradise Gardens is sumptuously produced and generously illustrated. It is a very, very beautiful to look at, but, on occasion, very difficult to read. Not because of the content, but the erratic prose style and peculiar disdain for punctuation and syntax mean that sentences often take several goes to unravel.

But it is worth persevering, if only to learn that the thyrsus, or staff, of Dionysus was a giant fennel stalk, or that Hindu philosophers classified flowers as 'pure', 'excitable' or 'indifferent'.

Musgrave's accounts of the belief systems are inevitably sketchy – it is no easy task to condense the tenets of Islam to a couple of pages. Much of this material has been covered, rather more elegantly, by Penelope Hobhouse, while Musgrave acknowledges his debt to Maggie Keswick and Günter Nitschke in the chapters on China and Japan.

Where the book enters interesting new territory is when it considers the role of gardens in polytheism and pantheism, whether modern Hindu temple gardens in India, or the plant-based rituals of the Aztecs and native North Americans. He also examines the role of gardens in secular society, ending with an exhortation to tree hugging.

This book has its faults, but it is a brave attempt at a colossal subject, and what do the great world religions teach us if not to strive?

Book offer
RRP £30. **Reader offer price £25** including p&p*.

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By Gilles Clément, £55
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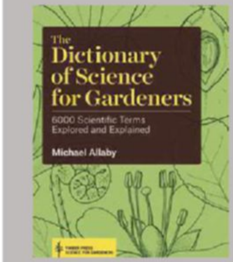
The Dictionary of Science for Gardeners
6000 Scientific Terms Explored and Explained
Michael Allaby

THE DICTIONARY OF SCIENCE FOR GARDENERS
By Michael Allaby, £25
Timber Press
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By Ben-Erik van Wyk and Michael Wink, £40
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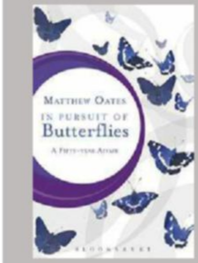

IN PURSUIT OF BUTTERFLIES: A FIFTY YEAR AFFAIR
By Matthew Oates
Bloomsbury, £18.99
ISBN 978-1472924506

OFFER PRICE **£16.99**

Based on Oates's detailed diaries, this lovely nature book chronicles a lifetime spent pursuing butterflies.

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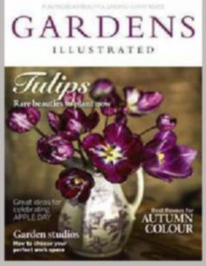

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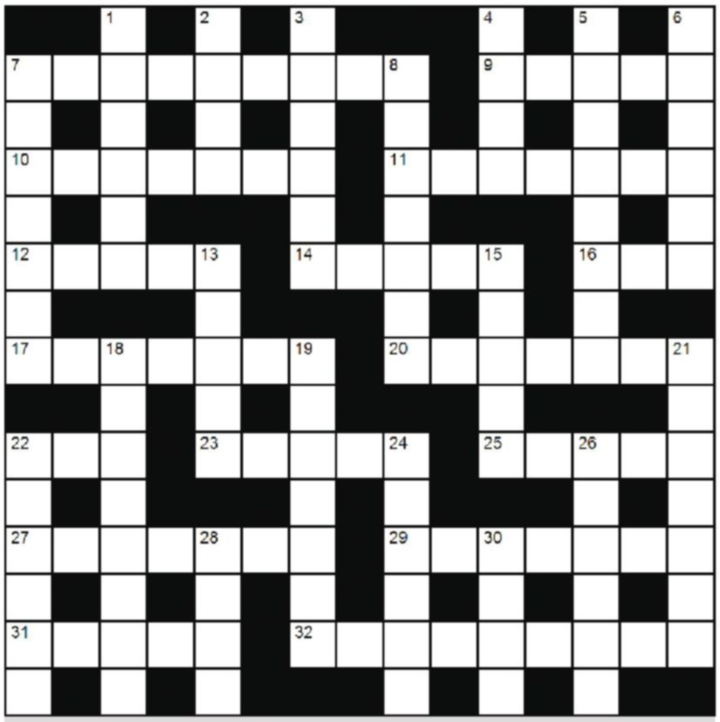

ACROSS

7 Confused, fled bower for garden plot! (6,3)
9 It’s part of a flower’s corolla, dearest (5)
10 Lupin breeder George’s terrier Jack? (7)
11 Like lush vegetation in clover Dan trimmed (7)
12 Willow I put in rose arrangement (5)
14 Tree related to birch – deal possibly, right? (5)
16 Liquidambar’s resin (3)
17 Henry, 19th-century horticulturist, sweet pea breeder, forced changes outside Kew initially (7)
20 Pollen-producing parts of flower decapitated large cats! (7)
22 Mr Simpson’s cry of incredulity: “Initially don’t overwater hollyhocks!” (3)
23 Broken vase contains name for plants of *Geum* genus (5)
25 Seedless orange introspectively gazed at? (5)
27 Dark red, acid cherry – possibly rose mallow, with saw removed (7)
29 Woodland flower – name one variety (7)
31 Subspecies of trailing *Pelargonium* found in mossy bilberries (5)
32 Godiva’s autumn crocus? (5,4)

DOWN

1 Small-scale tree cultivation? (6)
2 Evergreen flowering shrub in Hythe beach (4)
3 Shrub of honeysuckle family – could be (timeless) labiate (6)
4 Encouragement for a fruiting side shoot (4)
5 Grow sprawlingly (8)
6 Sturdy species of delphinium – makes unusual amulet (6)
7 A fruit of the spruce or pine (3,4)
8 Deciduous tree also called handkerchief tree – Ida, diva, is confused (7)
13 Wine obtained from Ontario jardinière (5)
15 National Centre for Organic Gardening – sounds absolutely correct! (5)
18 Turnip-shaped cabbage cultivar (8)
19 Wither, starting from upper growth, as spent plants do (3,4)
21 Start of sun verily altered the foliage colour of eg *Lamium* (7)
22 Type of rose? Flipping mad to inquire! (6)
24 Pursues plant stems (6)
26 Pansy-like flowers important to string quartets (6)
28 Flower that might be associated with toad or leopard (4)
30 Taro, by another name – in seedbed, Dorset (4)

SOLUTIONS TO THIS MONTH’S CROSSWORD WILL BE PRINTED NEXT MONTH

SEPTEMBER’S SOLUTIONS
ACROSS 1 Floricanes **7** Kale **10** Overture **11** Asti **12** Sitka **13** Ha-ha **14** Bacteria **16** Pineta **18** Akebia **20** Deadhead **22** Clay **24** Posts **26** Lush **27** Parrotia **28** Regrow **29** Type **30** Periwinkle.

DOWN 2 Leaf-stalk **3** Red List **4** Cones **5** Neottia **6** Siena **7/9** Kitchen garden **8** Larch **15** Ria **16** Pea **17** Toadstool **19** Baytree **20** Despair **21** Heligan **23** Loamy **24** Pot up **25** Straw.

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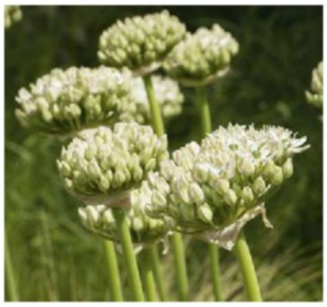
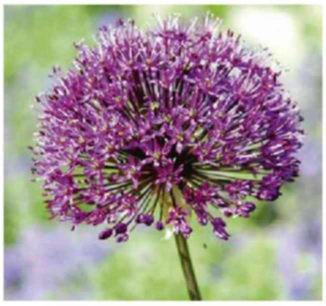
Reader offers

Save 20% on spring-flowering bulbs from Avon Bulbs

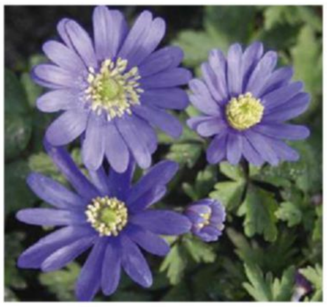
This issue we asked a selection of leading garden designers to choose their favourite spring bulbs for our feature on page 42. Inspired by their choices, specialist grower Avon Bulbs has put together a selection of bulbs at a 20% discount. We hope you're inspired too.



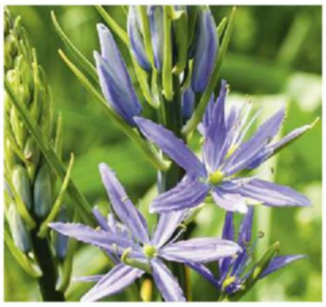
Allium nigrum **x 5**
~~£4~~ **Offer price £3.20**
The head is formed of 20-30 large, open, creamy-white flowers that, rather than forming a complete ball, are more flattened at the top. The flower is held about 60cm from the ground over grey-green basal leaves in June.



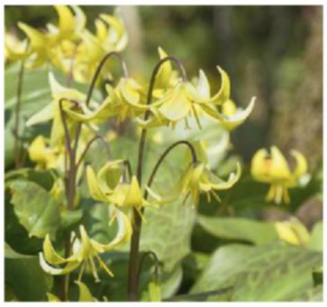
Allium hollandicum **'Purple Sensation' AGM x 5**
~~£3.90~~ **Offer price £3.10**
The flowers are generally 60-75cm tall, in a dark, intense purple and are at their best from mid May and into June. The slight variation in size, colour, maturity and height adds to their charm.



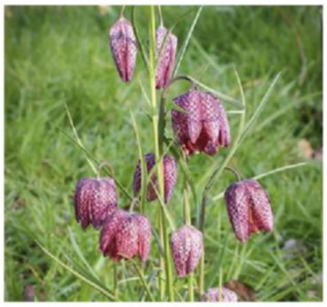
Anemone blanda **blue-flowered x 10**
~~£2.00~~ **Offer price £1.60**
Flowers with 10-15 petals in shades of blue, purple and mauve are carried above finely divided leaflets at about 10cm in height. These anemones are best in dappled shade. Flowers in March.



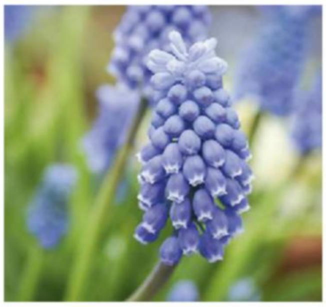
Camassia leichtlinii **subsp** ***suksdorfii*** **Caerulea Group x 5**
~~£5.30~~ **Offer price £4.20**
Prefers full sun in moisture-retentive soil, although it tolerates partial shade. The buds at the bottom of the raceme open first, with those at the top flowering up to a month later. Flowers April/May.



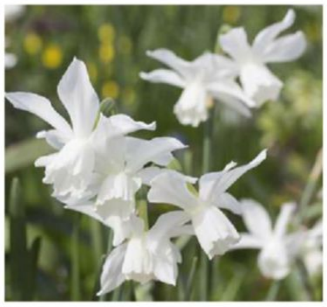
Erythronium **'Pagoda' AGM x 3**
~~£4.00~~ **Offer price £3.20**
One tuber produces up to ten nodding, star-like flowers with sulphur-yellow petals, a brownish central ring and yellow anthers. The leaves show faint white marbling. Grow under the shade of deciduous trees. Flowers April.



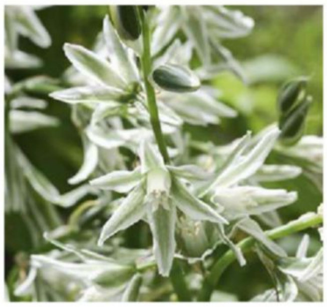
Fritillaria meleagris **AGM x 15**
~~£3.30~~ **Offer price £2.80**
Beautiful, square-shouldered, bell-shaped flowers in pink, mauve and darker purples, lightly chequered. Inside they are splashed with shining green. Grow in grass, or drained but damp soil in sun or part shade. Flowers April.



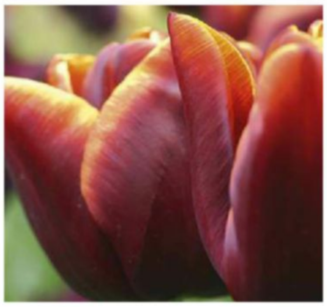
Muscari aucheri **'Blue Magic' x 10**
~~£3.00~~ **Offer price £2.40**
Bright blue with white rims to the mature flowers, growing to 12cm in height. They will do well in the drier, sunny conditions found under deciduous shrubs that provide summer shade. Flowers April.



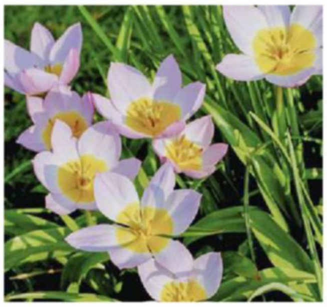
Narcissus **'Thalia' x 5**
~~£2.50~~ **Offer price £2.00**
One of the few daffodils that opens out pure white, this is refined and elegant, with a multi-headed, greeny-white, scented flower. A well-known classy favourite since 1916, it is also a very good cut flower. Flowers March/April.



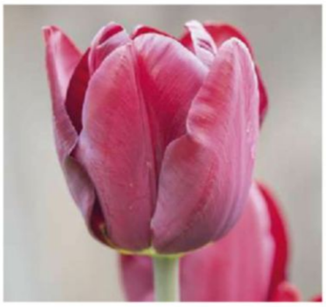
Ornithogalum nutans **AGM x 10**
~~£2.40~~ **Offer price £1.90**
Ornithogalum belong to the 'Star of Bethlehem' family. *Ornithogalum nutans* has very pretty, soft, silvery grey-green flowers, bluebell-like in stature and lasting well when picked. 22cm in height. Flowers May.



Tulipa **'Abu Hassan' x 10**
~~£5.25~~ **Offer price £4.20**
The rich, terracotta-red, triumph type flowers are each edged in gold. Held on sturdy stems, they grow to 45cm in height. Combines well with similarly coloured wallflowers. Flowers April/May.



Tulipa saxatilis **(Bakeri Group) 'Lilac Wonder' AGM x 10**
~~£2.80~~ **Offer price £2.20**
The flowers are 5-7cm wide with up to four per stem with a broad, butter-yellow central zone surrounded by darker pink-lilac. 15cm tall. Flowers late April/early May.



Tulipa **'Jan Reus' x 10**
~~£5.25~~ **Offer price £4.20**
A deep purple-red flower with petals that shimmer in the sun atop a dark stem, which adds to the impact. 45cm tall. Reliable and long flowering. Combines well with the acid-green foliage of euphorbias. Flowers April.

***Camassia leichtlinii* subsp *suksdorfii* 'Alba' x 3** ~~£6.00~~ **Offer price £4.80**
Creamy-white, star-shaped flowers form a loose pyramid, at the top of a 90cm stem. This cultivar tends to flower about 10-14 days later than the blue forms. Prefers moisture-retentive soil. Flowers May/June.

***Crocus* 'Jeanne d'Arc' x 15**
~~£4.00~~ **Offer price £3.20**
One of the 'Dutch' crocus, which are hybrids of *Crocus vernus*. Large white petals enclose bright-orange stigmata. Flowers at 12cm tall in late February and early March – well into the daffodil season.

***Narcissus* 'Topolino' AGM x 5**
~~£2.45~~ **Offer price £2.00**
A historic cultivar, this is a sturdy, tough dwarf form with grey-green foliage, a lemon-yellow trumpet and a pale-cream perianth. It is suited to pots or the front of borders, or for naturalising. Flowers March/April.

***Ornithogalum magnum* x 3**
~~£5.30~~ **Offer price £4.20**
Blooms in June at 60cm high with dozens of white flowers circling up the stem from the bottom as they open. Perfect for naturalising in drier, lighter soils. Taller than *O. nutans* at 60cm. Flowers June.

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I hope you like the products as much as myself and the Gardens Illustrated *team do,*

Juliet

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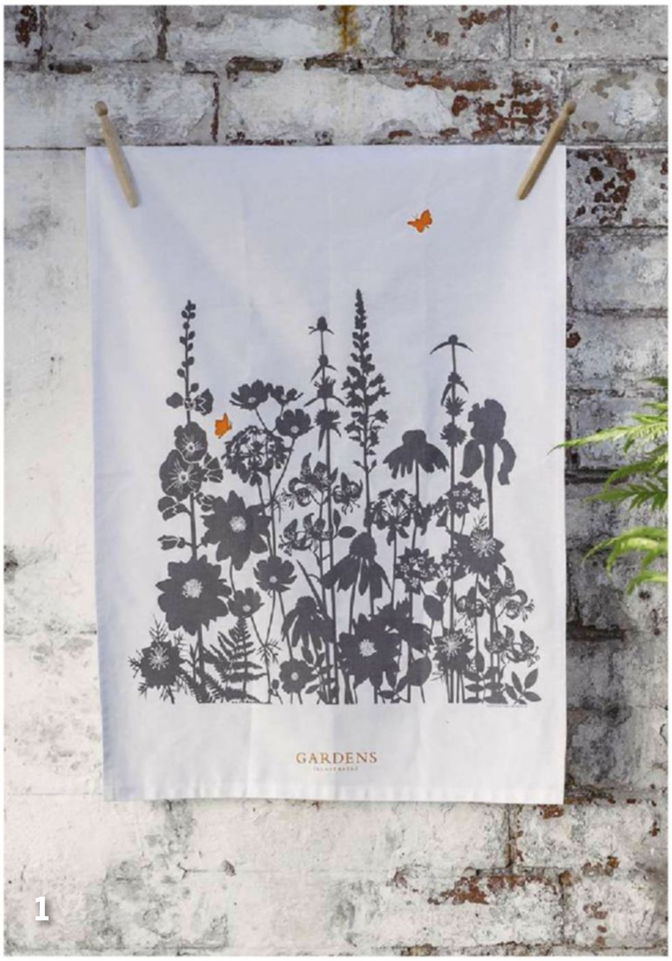

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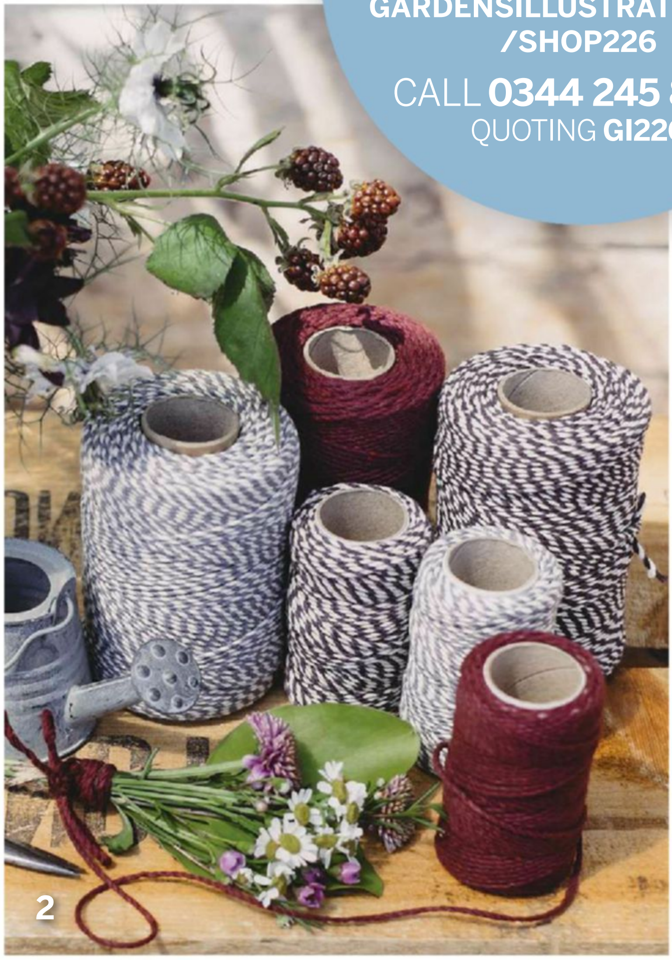

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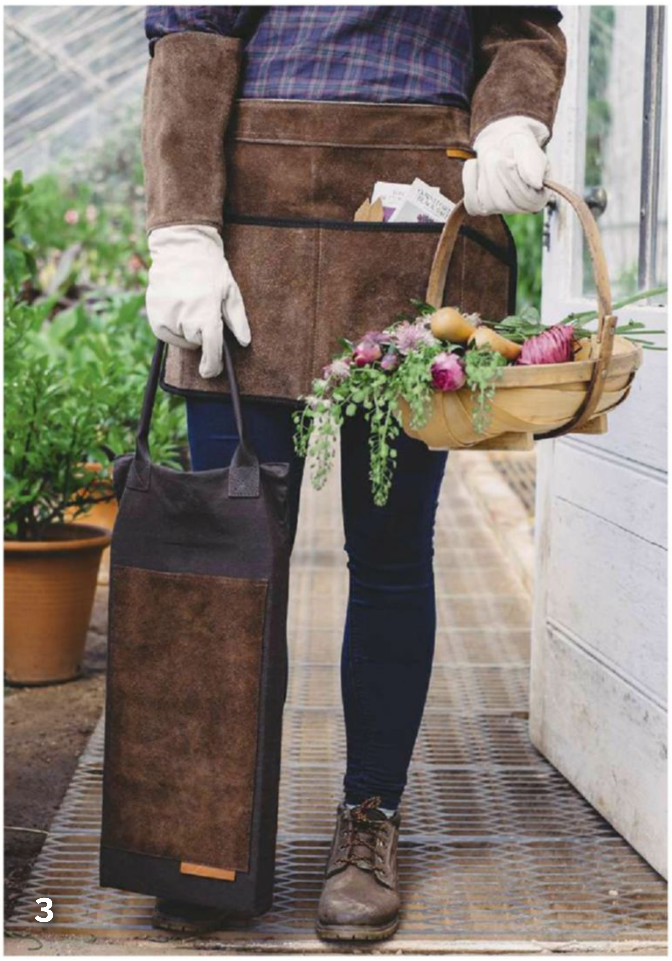

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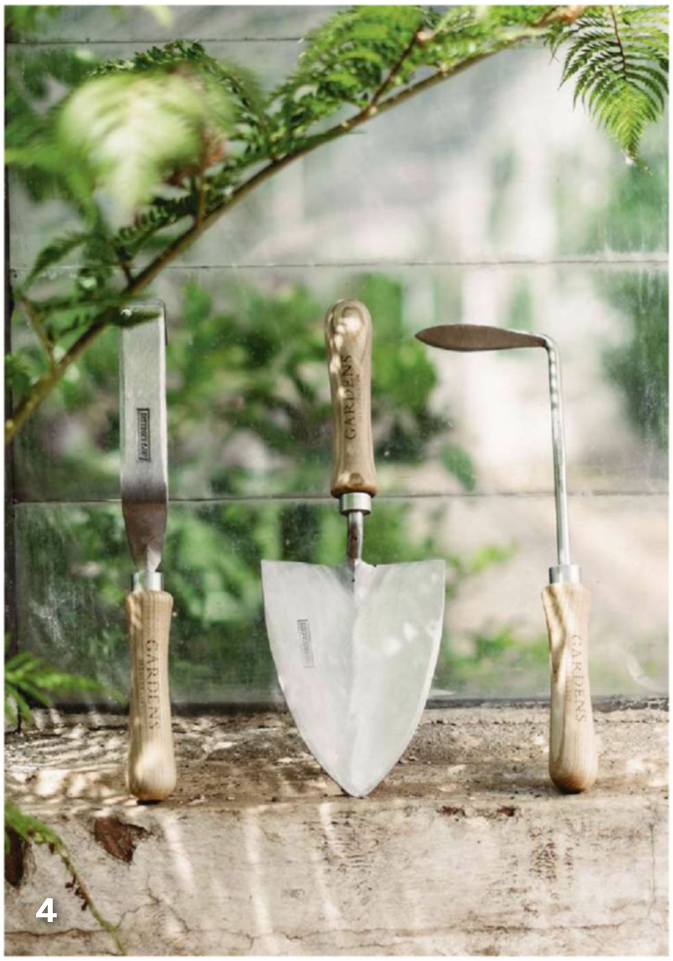

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Autumn in colour

Enjoy a garden visit this month and immerse yourself in the blaze of colour that autumn brings to borders and trees.

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2 THE GARDENS AT ABBEYWOOD

The Gardens at Abbeywood are set within a 45 Acre Estate. The long flowering herbaceous borders of the Main Garden and the Pool, Chapel and Pergola Gardens each bursting with sensational colour.

The Exotic Garden is a real showstopper in the summer months, until the first frost.

Address **Chester Road, Delamere, Cheshire, CW8 2HS**
Garden Enquiries **01606 888116**
Garden Cafe Enquiries **01606 889477**

3 MARKS HALL GARDENS AND ARBORETUM

Autumn is a very special time at Marks Hall. Dramatic changes in leaf colour form a stunning autumnal display. Tree tints develop from late September right through to November, providing a constantly changing palette of colour. The effect is enhanced at Marks Hall by the beautiful reflections cast in the lakes.

Address **Coggeshall, Essex, CO6 1TG**
Tel **01379 563796** Web **markshall.org.uk**

4 THORP PERROW ARBORETUM

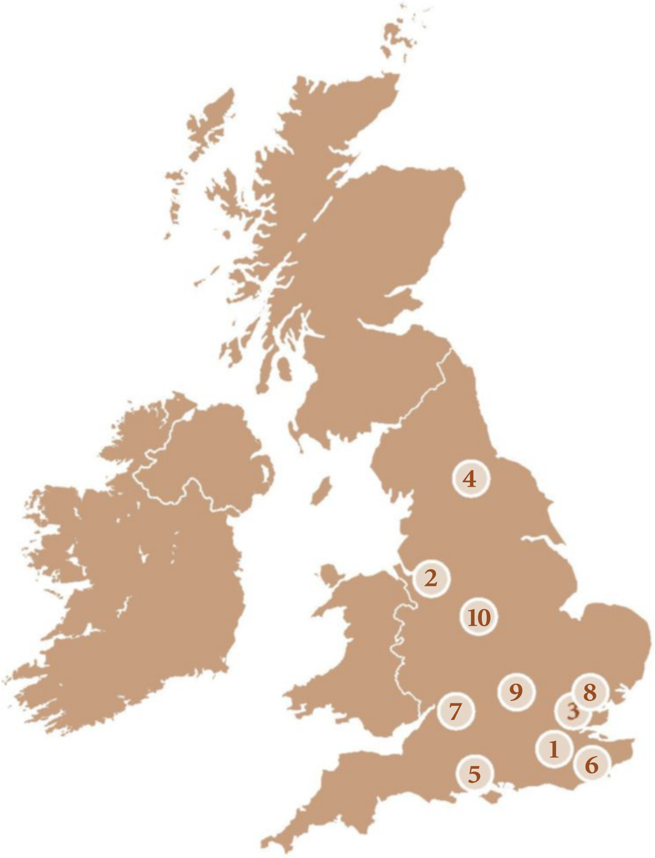
Thorp Perrow Arboretum shines at its' glorious best through the autumn months. 100 acres of woodland trails and glades are a blaze of fiery reds, oranges and golds. Seasonal events, family fun and delicious tearoom refreshments make Thorp Perrow Arboretum a great day out for all.

Address **Bedale, DL8 2PS**
Tel **01677 425323** Web **thorpperrow.com**

5 ABBOTSBURY SUBTROPICAL GARDENS

A recent winner of the HHA/ Christie's Garden of the Year Award and described by Alan Titchmarsh as 'one of the finest gardens I have ever visited'. Abbotsbury is celebrating its 250th anniversary with a whole host of new features that include a Burma rope bridge, a series of special events and even more fabulous plants.

Address **Bullers Way, Abbotsbury (nr Weymouth), Dorset, DT3 4LA**
Tel **01305 871387**
Web **abbotsburygardens.co.uk**

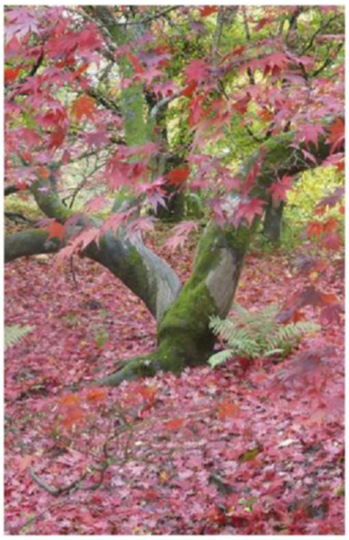


6 HEVER CASTLE AND GARDENS

Autumn is the season when Hever's striking trees come to the fore. The Dahlia Border provides dazzling displays in the early autumn and late roses can usually be seen. The Italian Garden maintains interest with its magnificent statuary and the yew topiary stands majestically en route to the Castle.

Address **Hever, near Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 7NG**
Tel **01732 865224**
Web **hevercastle.co.uk**

7 BATSFORD ARBORETUM



Enjoy spectacular autumn colour as the maples take centre stage with their mix of reds, yellows, oranges and golds. Wander through blazing tree colour, enjoy some retail therapy in the garden centre and treat yourself to a scrumptious lunch or afternoon tea. Open Monday to Saturday, 9am–5pm and Sunday, 10am–5pm.

Address **Batsford, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, GL56 9AB**
Tel **01386 701441**
Web **batsarb.co.uk**

8 THE BETH CHATTO GARDENS

Chelsea Gold Medal winner Dan Pearson said of celebrated author and plantswoman Beth Chatto: "Beth has taught me much about appropriateness in planting, both as a purist and an aesthete." October sees beautiful autumn hues, a pumpkin hunt and several painting workshops and gardening courses.

Address **Elmstead Market, Colchester, CO7 7DB**
Tel **01206 822007**
Web **bethchatto.co.uk**

9 WATERPERRY GARDENS

Waterperry Gardens – A place to explore, relax and shop in beautiful surroundings all year round. Celebrate Apple Weekend at Waterperry on October 10th and 11th. Apple and juice tastings, identification, expert advice and information about growing fruit trees, orchard tours and more.

Address **Waterperry, Near Wheatley, Oxfordshire, OX33 1JZ**
Tel **01844 339226**
Web **waterperrygardens.co.uk**

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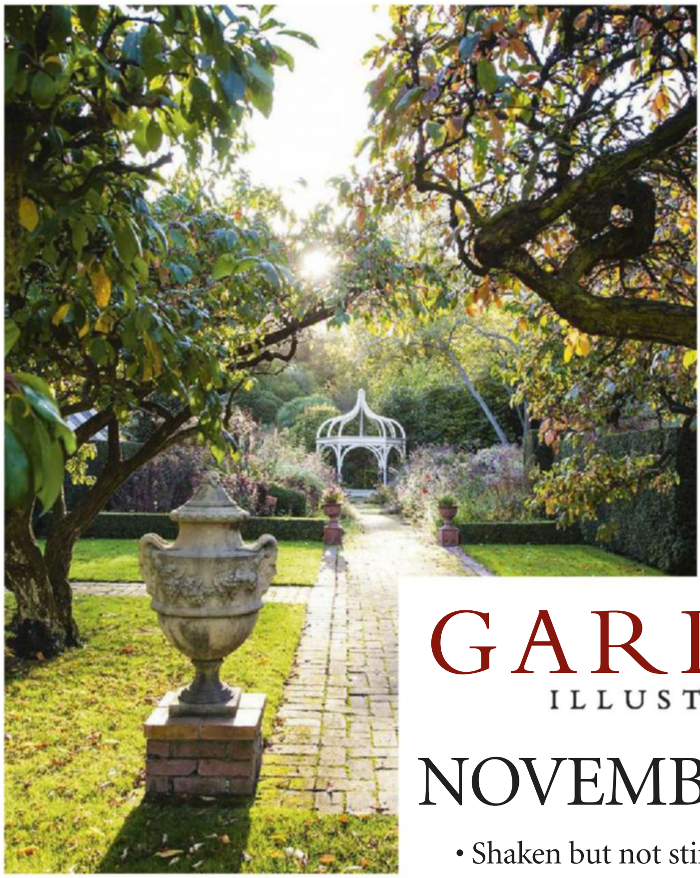

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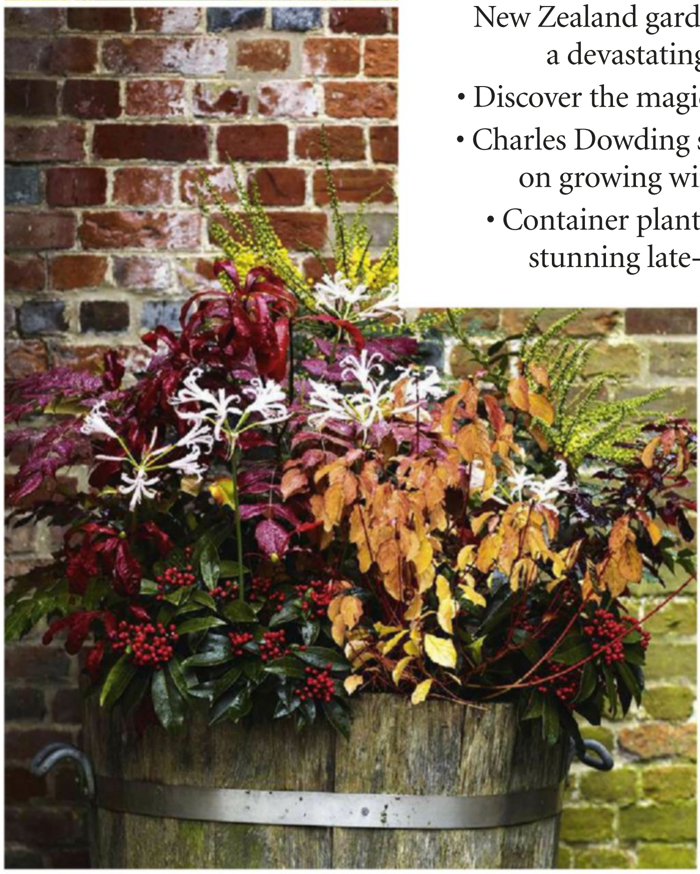

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Architectural (non)considerations

Planting your garden to conform to the period of your house is ridiculous, says Frank

WORDS **FRANK RONAN** ILLUSTRATION **CELIA HART**

A Californian reader wrote to congratulate me on my good luck in liking succulents, and to bemoan her bad luck in owning a house where they are not suitable, on account of it being built by 'a Brit' in 1904. The ongoing drought makes it impractical to plant anything else here, and even some succulents struggled this summer without watering. Not that the drought has prompted any serious attempt by the authorities to curtail irrigation. It is still a matter of conscience, at least in our neck of the woods, and not unusual to see conscience-stricken aeoniums wilted to pinheads in one garden while the neighbours either side flaunt green lawns and rose bushes.

> *I had always assumed that you plant what you like and if the house disagrees then you plant the house out*

Not feeling particularly merciful or sympathetic in the reply, I baited my correspondent by informing her that architectural considerations had never prevented me from larding the garden of an old cottage in Worcestershire with as many succulents as I could get away with (which turned out to be not many, in the long run), nor had they prevented Christopher Lloyd from adorning the circular Lutyens steps at Great Dixter with our fat friends. Steps that were not only from the same period as her house but which sat below a medieval one.

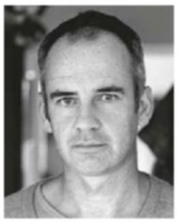
Can the style of a house really dictate the sort of plant by which it must be surrounded? It would never have occurred to me that it could be so. I had always assumed that you plant what you like and if the house disagrees then you plant the house out. Perhaps it is because I come from a part of the world where we take for granted an abundance of houses of every style going back a thousand years, combined with a passionate tradition of embracing every new fashion in gardening over the same period, that I can't see what rules there could be.

Of course there are historical reconstructions, which must have educational value, though they never seem to hit the mark aesthetically. But since most of us are not in the business of educating the public, why would you bother? If you did hear someone boast that all of the plants in their garden were grown at the date their house was built, or that the borders had been carefully reconstructed based on contemporary plans, you'd run a mile. Imagine finding yourself living in a seventies bungalow (which would be fine) and being forced to look out forever on amoeba-shaped beds of heathers and dwarf conifers (which would induce some kind of psychotic illness).

The house is the fixture, and I agree that if you extend the original architecture should be respected. But the garden around it is a fluid thing, which cannot stay still for a day, let alone the aeon that a solid house should last. To make the garden conform to the architecture is as ridiculous as dressing in the clothes of the period, and as pretentious.

In California this may not be so obvious. There are people alive now who would have known people who came in on wagon trains. Everything is relatively new and the houses are flimsy things, best not looked at too closely. If you had a house that was more than a hundred years old you might feel some sort of obligation to the rarity of it, but would you really want to burden yourself with a museum of a garden, full of plants completely unsuited to the climate?

My correspondent, unwithered by my unkindness, wrote back and had the courage to admit that the real problem was that she (I'm assuming she – though you can't always be sure with American names) didn't like succulents in the first place. Her passion was for dahlias and species impatiens. Now I can sympathise. Having to grow something you didn't like would be impossible, and if you are surrounded by people nagging you that the one thing you didn't like was the thing you should be growing because of a drought, blame the house. □



Frank Ronan is a novelist who gardens in both the UK and USA.

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